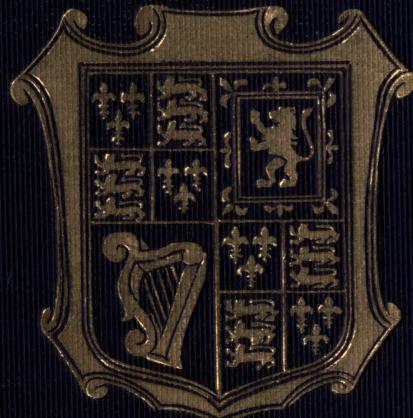


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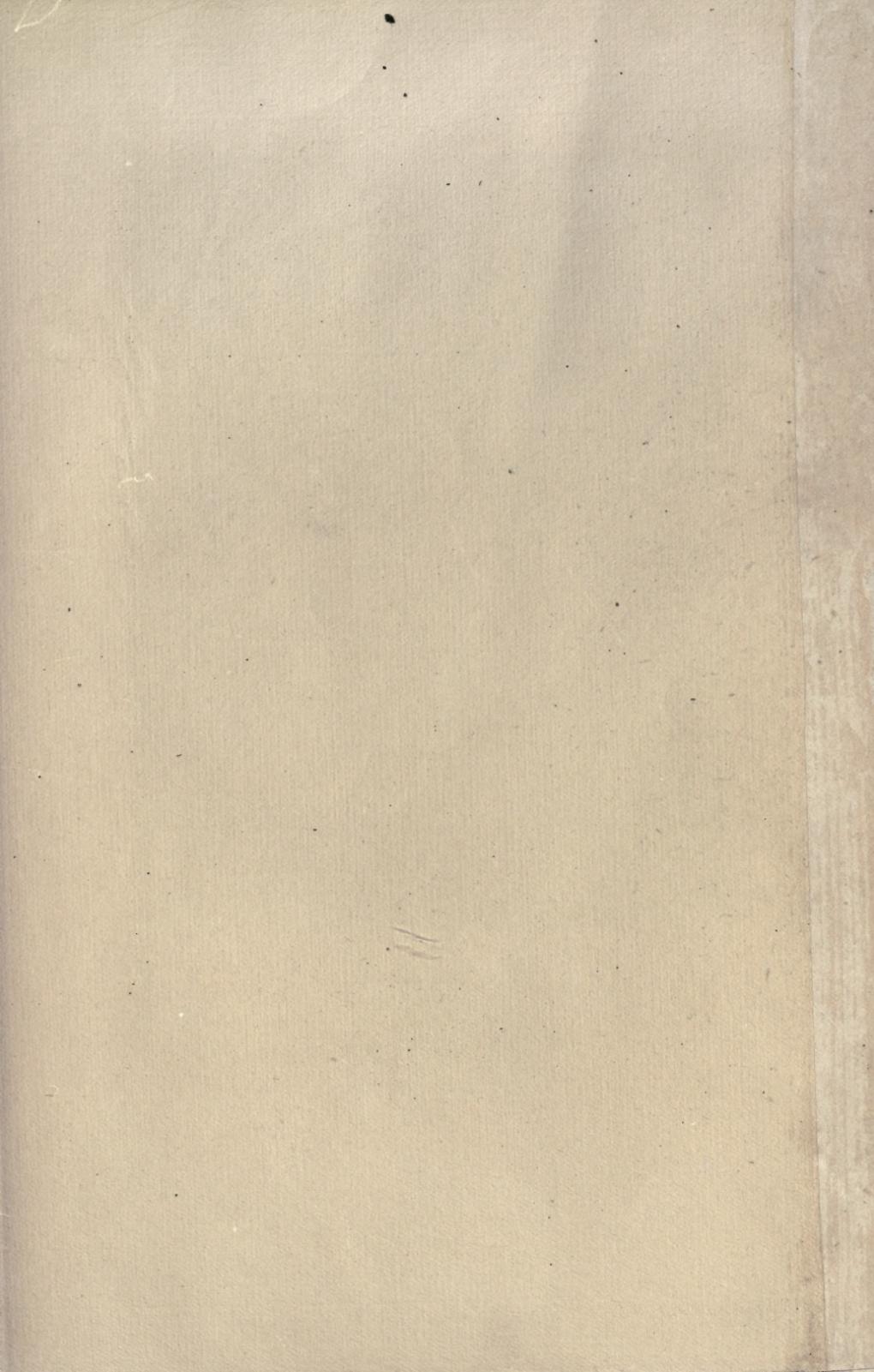
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George Villiers, 2d Duke of Buckingham.

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THE COURT OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER I.

PRINCE RUPERT.

Military Capacity of Prince Rupert—His Early Attachment to England—His Services in the German Wars—Taken Prisoner by General Hatzfeld—Proposed Marriage with Mlle. de Rohan—Her Generous Conduct toward Him—Military Exertions of Prince Rupert in Favour of Charles I.—The Prince's Uncalled-for Surrender of Bristol—His Quarrel with the Earl of Southampton—Distinguishes Himself in Naval Warfare—Turns Philosopher—His Skill at Tennis and in Pistol-shooting—Imitates the Fashionable at the Restoration—His Mistress—His Natural Children—Notice of His Gallant Son, Dudley Rupert—Death and Burial of the Prince.

PRINCE RUPERT, Count Palatine of the Rhine, Duke of Cumberland, Earl of Holderness, and a Knight of the Garter, was the third son of Frederick, King of Bohemia, by Elizabeth, daughter of James the First. He was, consequently, nephew to Charles the First and first cousin to Charles the Second. He was born at Prague, on the 19th December, 1619.

Prince Rupert was a soldier of fortune, and loved war for its own sake. Had his head been as cool as his heart was valiant, he would probably have changed the fortunes of the civil wars. Unfortunately, however, his headstrong and imprudent valour proved highly injurious to the cause for which he so loyally and gallantly fought. Though generally successful whenever he led the charge, he was ever dissatisfied with present advantages, and, by pushing his fortunes too far, almost invariably lost the superiority he had previously obtained. Rash, enterprising, and opinionated, he turned with contempt from the counsels of others, and yet was generally discomfited whenever he followed his own.

The childhood of Prince Rupert was passed in England, which he ever regarded as the country of his choice. Delighted with its society, and with its rural amusements and sports, he once, in a moment of enthusiasm, exclaimed to a friend in the hunting-field, "Ah, I wish I could break my neck, for then I should at least leave my bones in England."

Ardently devoted to the military profession, he became in early boyhood a denizen of the camp ; and, when only thirteen years of age, distinguished himself under Henry, Prince of Orange, at the siege of Rheinberg. About three years after this period, in December, 1635, he again returned to England, where he continued about two years.

He again left the English court in 1637, and, having succeeded in raising a small force in conjunction with his brother, the elector palatine, found himself, at the age of eighteen, in command of a regiment of horse in the German wars. The following year he accompanied his brother in an irruption into Westphalia. Their force, however, proved insufficient, and, at the battle of Vlota, in 1638, they were completely routed by the Imperial general, Hatzfield, and Prince Rupert was taken prisoner. In vain the Imperialists offered him freedom and military preferment, if he would abjure the reformed religion. He continued staunch in his faith, and consequently remained a prisoner about three years.

Charles the First had been anxious to marry the prince to Mlle. de Rohan, the rich heiress of the celebrated Duke de Sully, and accordingly the Earl of Leicester, the English ambassador at the court of France, was employed to bring about the match. The letters which passed between the earl on the one hand, and Charles and Secretary Windebank on the other, are not a little amusing. Leicester describes the lady as "far handsomer than is necessary, and much discreeter than is ordinary." But the great obstacle to their union was Cardinal Richelieu, who was naturally averse to confer so wealthy an heiress on a Protestant and a foreigner. The matrimonial treaty was still pending, when the report of Prince Rupert having been taken prisoner

was communicated to Mlle. de Rohan ; accompanied, moreover, by a friendly recommendation that she should abandon him for some more prosperous suitor. To her credit, she turned a deaf ear to the unromantic and unpalatable advice. "It was true," she said, "that she had never been engaged to the prince, but, nevertheless, she had entertained her inclinations which still existed. It would be a crime," she added, "to desert a suitor because of his misfortunes ; and, on the other hand, it was a generosity to regard him with the same feelings as when he was in prosperity."

The unfortunate military exertions of Prince Rupert in the service of Charles the First are well known. At the commencement of the civil troubles, in 1642, he hastened to England to offer his services to his uncle. He was only in his twenty-fourth year when he joined the king at York ; shortly after which period he was elected a Knight of the Garter, at the last feast of the order which was ever held by that unfortunate monarch. From this period, until 1645, we find him engaged in all the military operations of that eventful time, including the actions of Edgehill, Marston Moor, and Naseby. In each of these he distinguished himself alike by his usual want of caution and by his unconquerable intrepidity and fruitless courage.

But his uncalled-for and unaccountable surrender of the city of Bristol to Fairfax, in 1645, was as

fatal to his character as a soldier as it proved to the cause which he had embraced. From the strength of the garrison, and from his own reputation for military experience, a vigorous and successful resistance had been anticipated by his friends. He had himself written to the king, undertaking to retain possession of the place for four months, and forces were being actively collected for its relief, when suddenly the astounding news of its having capitulated was communicated to Charles. By the fall of Bristol, the king not only lost his principal magazines, but South Wales and the West of England were also placed at the mercy of the enemy. Notwithstanding their near relationship, Charles, with an energy for which he has rarely received credit, instantly deprived his nephew of all his commissions. The letter, in which he dismisses his luckless nephew from his service, is sufficiently curious :

“ NEPHEW: — Though the loss of Bristol be a great blow to me, yet your surrendering it as you did is of so much affliction to me, that it makes me not only forget the consideration of that place, but is also the greatest trial of my constancy that hath yet befallen me. For what is to be done, after one that is so near to me, both in blood and friendship, submits himself to so mean an action? I give it the easiest terms such —. I have so much to say that I will say no

more of it, only lest rashness of judgment be laid to my charge, I must remember you of your letter of the 12th of August, whereby you assured me that if no mutiny happened you would keep Bristol for four months. Did you keep it four days? Was there anything like a mutiny? More questions might be asked, but now, I confess, to little purpose. My conclusion is to desire you to make your subsistence, until it shall please God to determine of my condition, somewhere beyond sea; to which end I send you herewith a pass; and I pray God to make you sensible of your present condition, and give you means to redeem what you have lost; for I shall have no greater joy in a victory than a just occasion, without blushing, to assure you of my being

“Your loving uncle and most faithful friend,
“C. R.”

The prince immediately hastened to explain his conduct to Charles, and to endeavour to recover his good opinion. The king, however, though he exonerated him from all suspicion of disloyalty or treason, very properly refused to absolve him from the charge of indiscretion, and never again became a suitor for his services.

His rash intrepidity seems to have been exceeded only by his readiness to take offence at some imaginary insult, — the common failing of a weak mind. About the time that Charles fled from Oxford to



now all the world over and I have not had
a quiet hour since. I have been writing to you
all the time, and you will have seen my
last few letters. But you will not have
seen the last one, for it is going to you now
by express. If you will not get it before
you get this, you will have to wait for the
next one, which will be bound up in
a week. I send you the *Review* & *Editorial* and a
few other articles and extracts of my own
writing, and you will see what I have been
up to. I have not had time to do much, but
I have had time to do a great deal.

Prince Rupert.

Photo-etching after the painting by Vandyke.

The Prince has different features to those of his
father or brother, and are somewhat like those
of his grandfather. The King, however, was very
handsome, and the Queen of Scotland, or
Mary, very pretty, indeed prettier than her
husband, who was not handsome.

The only portrait known to have been painted
only by his mother's order is the one
now in the possession of the Duke of
Norfolk, the other three being given to
the Queen, the Duke of York, and the Duke of



the Scots' army, we find the prince on the point of fighting a duel with the loyal, virtuous, and high-minded Earl of Southampton,¹ the friend of Lord Clarendon, and afterward his own chosen companion in the days of their adversity. The latter having made use of some expressions at the council-table, which the hot-headed prince interpreted as applying personally to himself, he instantly despatched Lord Gerard² to the earl, in order to insist upon his making an immediate apology. Southampton, however, so far from retracting, persisted in repeating the language which he had made use of at the council-board. Accordingly, Prince Rupert, laying aside his near relationship to the king, desired Lord Gerard to return to the earl as the bearer of a formal challenge. They were to have fought the next morning with pistols; but Lord Gerard's frequent visits having excited suspicion, and the words spoken at the council-table having been called to mind, the gates of Oxford were closed to prevent the egress of the intended combatants, and eventually a reconciliation was effected between them.

Prince Rupert having returned to England at the Restoration, he was shortly afterward made a Privy Councillor, Vice-Admiral of England, Con-

¹ Thomas Wriothesley, fourth Earl of Southampton, K. G., Lord Treasurer of England, and father of the celebrated Rachel, Lady Russell. He died 16th May, 1667.

² Charles Gerard, fourth Baron Gerard. He died in 1667.

stable of Windsor Castle, and granted a pension of 4,000*l.* a year. From the period of the loss of his military reputation by his surrender of Bristol, he had adopted and distinguished himself in the naval profession ; and accordingly, at the Restoration, Charles the Second willingly availed himself of the prince's undoubted valour and valuable experience at sea. In the great sea-fight with the Dutch, in 1665, he was second in command under the Duke of York ; and, in the doubtful naval engagements with the Dutch in 1673, was admiral of the English fleet.

Later in life he became a mechanist and a philosopher, and amidst his forges and furnaces found a sufficient equivalent for the tumultuous excitement of his former career. He is well-known as the inventor of mezzotinto, of which the accidental circumstance of his observing a soldier scraping a rusty fusil is said to have supplied him with the idea. He also invented glass drops, and a metal, known by his name, which was used for casting guns ; his method of boring them was much esteemed. The angler of the seventeenth century was indebted to his contrivance for the best-tempered fish-hooks which were then made in England.

Prince Rupert was famous for his play at tennis, and was also an excellent marksman with firearms. A particular instance of his skill is mentioned in Plot's History of Staffordshire, where he is said

to have sent two balls successively, with a horse-pistol, through the weathercock of St. Mary's steeple at Stafford, a distance of sixty yards. The feat was performed in the presence of Charles the First.

An excessive admiration of female beauty had always been a failing of Prince Rupert. Accordingly, at a somewhat advanced age, we find him imitating the fashionable vices of the court of Charles the Second, and even supporting Mrs. Hughes, a handsome actress belonging to the king's company, as his acknowledged mistress. As this person was on the stage as early as 1663, which was very shortly after female characters had ceased to be performed by men, she must have been one of the earliest actresses who figured in public. She was still on the stage as late as 1676.

Evelyn remarks in his diary (18th October, 1666), "This night was acted my Lord Broghill's tragedy, called 'Mustapha,' before their Majesties at court, at which I was present, very seldom going to the public theatres for many reasons now, as they were abused to an atheistical liberty; foul and indecent women now (and never till now) permitted to appear and act, who, inflaming several young noblemen and gallants, became their misses, and to some their wives; witness the Earl of Oxford, Sir R. Howard, Prince Rupert, the Earl of Dorset, and another greater person than any of

them, who fell into their snares, to the reproach of their noble families, and ruin of both body and soul."

The prince, soon after the commencement of their intercourse, purchased for his mistress, of Sir Nicholas Crispe, the splendid mansion at Hammersmith, afterward known as Brandenburgh House. His connection with this lady appears to have wrought a considerable change in his character and habits. "Prince Rupert," says Count Hamilton, "found charms in the person of a player called Hughes, who brought down and greatly subdued his natural fierceness. From this time, adieu alembics, crucibles, furnaces, and all the black furniture of the forges. A complete farewell to all mathematical instruments and chemical speculations. Sweet powders and essences were now the only ingredients that occupied any share of his attention. The impertinent gipsy chose to be attacked in form, and proudly refusing money, that, in the end, she might sell her favours at a dearer rate, she caused the poor prince to act a part so unnatural that he no longer appeared like the same person. The king was greatly pleased with that event, for which great rejoicings were made at Tunbridge; but nobody was bold enough to make it the subject of satire, though the same constraint was not observed respecting the follies of other personages."

By this person the prince had a daughter, Ru-

perta, born in 1671, who became the wife of Lieutenant-General Emanuel Scroope Howe. She died at Somerset House, about 1740. Lord Lansdown celebrates her in his "Progress of Beauty : "

"Rupert, of royal blood, with modest grace,
Blushes to hear the triumphs of her face."

The prince also left a son, Dudley Rupert, by Francisca Bard, daughter of Henry Bard, Viscount Bellomont. In his will he styles him Dudley Bard, and leaves him a considerable property in the Palatinate. This youth was educated at Eton, where he is said to have been remarkable for his modesty and mild disposition. He seems, notwithstanding, to have inherited the intrepidity of his father, and to have gladly seized the earliest opportunity of presenting himself in arms. At the age of nineteen he entered as a volunteer in the emperor's army, and served in a campaign against the Turks. He particularly distinguished himself by his valour at the siege of Buda, where he was killed in storming a breach, on the 13th of July, 1686.

Prince Rupert died of a pleurisy and fever, at his house in Spring Gardens, on the 29th of November, 1684, in the sixty-third year of his age. He was buried privately, on the 6th of December following, on the south side of Henry the Seventh's Chapel.

CHAPTER II.

GEORGE MONK, DUKE OF ALBEMARLE.

Lineage of This Personage — Cudgels the Under-Sheriff for Arresting His Father — Adopts the Military Profession — Sides with the King in the Civil War — Taken Prisoner by Fairfax — His Imprisonment in the Tower — Released by Cromwell — Curious Particulars Relating to His Wife, Anne Clarges — Her Character and Share in the Restoration — Monk Effects the Return of the King — Honours Heaped upon Him by Charles — Anecdotes — Monk's Conduct during the Great Plague — Gumble's Account of Its Ravages — Instances of Monk's Intrepidity — Summary of His Character — His Last Sickness — His Death and Burial — Notice of Christopher, the Second Duke of Albemarle — Extraordinary Character of His Duchess — Suitors of This Lady — Her Death.

THIS celebrated person was a younger son of Sir Thomas Monk, of Potheridge (or, as it was anciently styled, 'Pon-the-ridge), in Devonshire. He was born at the manor-house of that place on the 6th of December, 1608, and received his education in his native town. His family were among the most ancient in the county, having been settled at Potheridge as early as the reign of Henry the Third. The levellers in politics are not unfrequently the greatest admirers of rank; accordingly, in after times, when Monk, at the

death of Cromwell, became the first person in the Commonwealth, we find his flatterers actually putting forward his claim to the crown, on the ground that he was descended from the Plantagenets.

At the age of sixteen, he acquired a local notoriety by cudgelling an under-sheriff who had arrested his father, and, in consequence of this pardonable though irregular act of retribution, was compelled to quit the county. The following year (1625) he placed himself under the standard of his kinsman, Sir Richard Grenville, who became his master in the art of war. Before he had reached the age of twenty-one, he had served in the disastrous expeditions against Cadiz and the Isle of Rhé, and also in the Low Countries, under Lords Oxford and Goring. "In this service," says his biographer and medical attendant, Skinner, "he did not, like a young captain, retain his commission as a warrant for luxury and extravagance; but in earnest minded the business of a soldier, informing himself duly in all the methods and arts of war, being present at most of the great actions that happened during his almost ten years' continuance in that employment." Notwithstanding the pernicious example of the gay and reckless cavaliers who were his companions in arms, his moral conduct was exemplary, and he continued to be strictly punctual in the fulfilment of his religious duties.

He sided with the king during the civil struggles, but having been unfortunately taken prisoner by Fairfax at the siege of Nantwich, on the 25th of January, 1644, was committed to the Tower of London. During the time, nearly three years, that he was a prisoner in the hands of the Parliament, were fought the great actions of Marston Moor, Newbury, and Naseby. To a soldier of fortune, and especially to one of Monk's ardent temperament, a confinement in such stirring times must have been almost intolerable. While a prisoner in the Tower, he occupied himself by compiling a small folio volume, entitled "Observations upon Military and Political Affairs." Walpole, who, in consequence of his having been the author of this treatise, has included him among his "Noble Authors," styles it a kind of "military grammar."

During his incarceration, Monk was put to great straits for want even of the smallest sums. A letter to his elder brother, Thomas Monk, who had succeeded his father in the family property, shows the indifferent state of his circumstances at this period.

"I wrote unto you by Captain Bley, in which letter I did desire you to send me some money. I have received fifty pounds by your order long since, for which I return you many thanks. My necessities are such that they enforce me to entreat you to furnish me with fifty pounds more as soon as possi-

ble you may, and you shall very much oblige me in it. I shall entreat you to be mindful of me concerning my exchange, for, I doubt, all my friends have forgotten me. I earnestly entreat you, therefore, if it lies in your power, to remember me concerning my liberty; and so, in haste, I rest, your faithful brother and servant,

“GEORGE MONK.”

It was about this period that Charles the First, with more generosity and feeling for the sufferings of his adherents than his family have generally had the credit for, kindly sent him a present of a hundred pounds. It was at a time when the king could ill spare even so insignificant a sum, or, as Monk's chaplain, Doctor Gumble, quaintly observes, when “Oxford and the Indies had little commerce.” Monk, it is said, frequently alluded in more prosperous times to the king's kindness; possibly the recollection of this act of generosity may indirectly have influenced his subsequent exertions in favour of Charles the Second.

At length, in November, 1646, the high opinion which Cromwell had formed of the military genius of Monk had the effect of procuring his enlargement. Cromwell had long endeavoured, but to no purpose, to change the political principles of his prisoner. But now that the royal cause appeared utterly desperate, and that Charles himself was a prisoner in the hands of his enemy, Monk with-

out much scruple accepted a command in the Irish service. It was on the condition, however, that he should only be required to act against the Irish rebels, and that he should on no account be expected to fight against the king. While in the Tower, he had formed a strict friendship with Doctor Wren, Bishop of Ely, who is said by his conversation to have confirmed him in his principles of loyalty. When, on the eve of his release from confinement, he came to bid the venerable prelate farewell, "I am going," he said, "to do his Majesty the best service I can against the rebels in Ireland;" and he added, "I hope I shall one day do him service in England."

During his imprisonment in the Tower, Monk had unfortunately formed a discreditable connection with Anne Clarges, who became in the first instance his mistress and afterward his duchess. This once celebrated woman was the daughter of a blacksmith, and had been bred a milliner. "When Monk was a prisoner in the Tower," says Aubrey, "his sempstress, Anne Clarges, a blacksmith's daughter, was kind to him in a double capacity. It must be remembered that he was then in want, and that she assisted him. Here she had a child. She was not at all handsome nor cleanly. Her mother was one of the five women-barbers, and a woman of ill-fame. A ballad was made on her and the other four; the burden of it was :

“ Did you ever hear the like,
Or ever hear the fame,
Of five women barbers,
Who lived in Drury Lane ? ”

In a curious memoir of one Mul-Sack, a celebrated highwayman, there is a notice of these ladies. “ They were five noted Amazons in Drury Lane, who were called women-shavers, and whose actions were then talked of much about town ; till being apprehended for a riot, and one or two of them severely punished, the rest fled to Barbadoes.” The writer of this memoir mentions a disgusting and brutal act of cruelty on the part of these wretches toward another woman, the particulars of which are too gross for publication.

In an action for trespass, tried in the Court of King’s Bench on the 15th of November, 1700, — William Sherwin being plaintiff, and Sir William Clarges, Bart., and others, defendants, — there transpired some very curious particulars respecting the Duchess of Albemarle. It appeared in evidence that she was the daughter of John Clarges, a resident in the Savoy, and farrier to General Monk ; that she married, in 1632, one Thomas Ratford, the son of a farrier residing in the Mews ; that she had a daughter by this person, who was born in 1634 and died in 1638 ; and lastly that she resided with her husband at the “ Three Spanish Gipsies ” in the New Exchange, where they were venders of wash-balls, powder, gloves, and articles

of a similar nature. It further appeared that in 1647, being then sempstress to Colonel Monk, she was in the habit of carrying him his linen ; that both her parents died in 1648 ; that the following year she quarrelled with and separated from Ratford ; that in 1652 she was married in the Church of St. George, Southwark, to General George Monk, and further that, in the course of the following year, she was delivered of a son (afterward the second Duke of Albemarle), who was suckled by one Honour Mills, a vender of apples, herbs, and oysters. The point at issue was the right and title to the manor of Sutton in Yorkshire, and other lands ; the plaintiff claiming them as heir at law and representative to Thomas Monk, elder brother to the first Duke of Albemarle ; and the defendant as devisee under the will of Christopher, the second duke. The only material point to be decided, was whether Ratford were actually deceased at the period of the marriage of his supposed widow with Monk. On the side of the plaintiff, it was sworn by one witness that he had seen Ratford alive about the month of July, 1660, as many as eight years after the second marriage. Another witness affirmed that he had seen him as late as the year 1665, and a second time after the Duke and Duchess of Albemarle were both dead ; and thirdly, a woman swore that she had seen him on the very day that his wife (then called Duchess of Albemarle) was placed in her coffin. On the

part of the defendant, and in opposition to this evidence, were alleged the material facts that, during the lives of the Duke of Albemarle and his son, the matter had never been questioned, and, moreover, that the defendant had already thrice obtained verdicts in his favour in the Court of King's Bench. Some other presumptive evidence was adduced, but of less weight. In summing up, the Lord Chief Justice told the jury: "If you are certain that Duke Christopher was born while Thomas Ratford was living, you must find for the plaintiff. If you believe he was born after Ratford was dead, or that nothing appears what became of him after Duke George married his wife you must find for the defendant." The verdict was given in favour of the defendant.

According to the majority of her contemporaries, a more vulgar, dirty, boisterous, and disagreeable woman than the Duchess of Albemarle it would be difficult to conceive. If we are to believe their assertions, she was seldom without rage in her countenance and a curse on her lips. Her "volleys of oaths" were notorious. In the excluded passages of Lord Clarendon's History, "Monk," he says, "was cursed, after a long familiarity, to marry a woman of the lowest extraction, the least wit, and less beauty." And again, adds his lordship, "She was a woman *nihil muliebris præter corpus gerens*," a woman with nothing feminine about her but her form. Though Lord Clarendon and the turbulent

duchess were far from having been friends, the satire is undoubtedly not exaggerated. Burnet calls her “a ravenous, mean, and contemptible creature, who thought of nothing but getting and spending.” According to the writer of an intercepted letter, dated 19th of September, 1653, “Our admiral, Monk, hath lately declared a common ugly woman his wife, and legitimated three or four bastards he hath had by her, during his growth in grace and saintship.” Monk was said to have been more in fear of her than of an army, and it has even been asserted that she manually chastised him.

She was a staunch royalist, and, as she maintained an unbounded influence over her husband, had probably no inconsiderable share in effecting the Restoration. Monk, indeed, had a high opinion of her mental powers, and frequently consulted her in times of difficulty. D’Israeli, in his ingenious “Curiosities of Literature,” has quoted a passage from a MS. of Sir Thomas Browne, which places Monk’s conduct immediately previous to the Restoration, and also his wife’s share in effecting that great event, in rather a curious light. “Monk,” says the writer, “gave fair promises to the Rump; but at last agreed with the French ambassador to take the government on himself; by whom he had a promise from Mazarin of assistance from France. This bargain was struck late at night; but not so secretly but that Monk’s wife, who had posted herself conveniently behind the hangings, finding what

was resolved upon, sent her brother Clarges away immediately with notice of it to Sir A. A.¹ She had promised to watch her husband, and inform Sir A. how matters stood. Sir A. caused the Council of State, whereof he was a member, to be summoned, and charged Monk that he was playing false. The general insisted that he was true to his principles, and firm to what he had promised, and that he was ready to give them all satisfaction. Sir A. told him if he were sincere he would remove all scruples, and would instantly take away their commissions from such and such men in the army and appoint others, and that before he left the room. Monk consented ; a great part of the commissions of his officers were changed ; and Sir Edward Harley, a member of the Council, and then present, was made Governor of Dunkirk, in the room of Sir William Lockhart ; the army ceased to be at Monk's devotion ; the ambassador was recalled, and broke his heart."

Doctor Price, one of Monk's chaplains, has bequeathed us some curious notices respecting the Duchess of Albemarle. Speaking of the duke's share in effecting the Restoration, he says : " His wife had in some degree prepared him to appear when the first opportunity should be offered. For

¹ Sir Anthony Ashley Cooper, afterward first Earl of Shaftesbury. Mr. D'Israeli's story is evidently the same as that related by Locke among other anecdotes of Lord Shaftesbury. The account was given to the philosopher by the earl himself, who was probably also the informant of Sir Thomas Browne.

her custom was (when the General's and her own work and the day were ended) to come into the dining-room in her treason-gown, as I called it, I telling him that when she had that gown on, he should allow her to say anything. And, indeed, her tongue was her own then, and she would not spare it; insomuch that I, who still chose to give my attendance at those hours, have often shut the dining-room doors, and charged the servants to stand without till they were called in."

The chaplain also relates a remarkable dream of this lady, in which, according to the zealous divine, the approaching Restoration was supernaturally revealed to her. "She saw," says Doctor Price, "a great crown of gold on the top of a dunghill, which a numerous company of brave men encompassed, but for a great while none would break the ring. At last there came a tall black man up the dunghill, took up the crown, and put it upon his head. Upon the relating of this, she asked what manner of man the king was. I told her that when I was an Eton scholar, I saw at Windsor, sometimes, the Prince of Wales, at the head of a company of boys; that himself was a very lovely black boy, and that I heard that, since, he was grown very tall." Great events often owe their birth to trifles; and, fantastic as the theory may appear, the fact is not impossible that England owes the restoration of royalty to this and other similarly trifling circumstances connected with the influence which Anne Clarges

exercised over the mind of her uxorious lord. Nothing, indeed, appears more natural than that an ignorant and uneducated woman should have attached an undue degree of importance to an idle dream. The duchess, moreover, is known to have been a zealous adherent of the House of Stuart ; and, lastly, it is certain that she exerted all her influence to induce him to restore Charles the Second to the throne.

At the Restoration, the Duchess of Albemarle divested herself of none of the homeliness of Anne Clarges. Pepys speaks of her on different occasions as a “ plain, homely, and ill-looked dowdy,” and even seems to have conceived a personal dislike to her. Speaking of an occasion of his dining at her husband’s table, “ The duke,” he says, “ has sorry company, dirty dishes, bad meat, and a nasty wife at table.” Monk was once drinking with one Troutbecke, a drunken sot, when he happened to express his surprise that Nan Hyde, as he styled the chancellor’s daughter, should have become Duchess of York. “ If you will give me another bottle,” said Troutbecke, “ I will tell you as great, if not a greater, miracle ; and that is, that our dirty Bess should come to be Duchess of Albemarle.” To gloss over as much as possible the meanness of her birth, her father, Thomas Clarges, was knighted, and her brother, William Clarges, created a baronet.

The military services of Monk, especially at the

battle of Dunbar, and in the subsequent naval engagements with the Dutch, are sufficiently well known. His administration in Scotland, after the reduction of that country, has also received high praise. His power and popularity were naturally dreaded by an unsettled government ; and, consequently, long before he declared for the king, we find his fidelity suspected by his employers. In a letter addressed to him by the Protector, the latter adds, in a postscript : “ There be that tell me that there is a certain cunning fellow in Scotland, called George Monk, who is said to lie in wait there to introduce Charles Stuart : I pray you use your diligence to apprehend him, and send him to me.” The real jealousy, concealed beneath this playful language, is sufficiently evident.

Whether in restoring Charles, and in rejecting the supreme authority for himself, Monk acted from the pure dictates of conscience ; or whether he considered it the most certain method of advancing his own interests and fortunes, it would not be easy to determine. The question might be argued at great length, and in the issue might probably prove unfavourable to the reputation of honest George. Undoubtedly his principles had all along been strictly monarchical, — a fact of which Charles the Second was evidently aware ; indeed, that his loyalty might not grow cold, the young king, during his exile, more than once sent reminders to his future benefactor. The following

curious letter was communicated to Doctor Barwick by Christopher, the second Duke of Albemarle :

“ COLOGNE, August 12, 1655. [N.S.]

“ One who believes he knows your nature and inclinations very well, assures me that, notwithstanding all ill accidents and misfortunes, you retain still your old affection for me, and resolve to express it upon reasonable opportunity, which is as much as I look for from you. We must all wait patiently for that opportunity, which may be offered sooner than you expect ; when it is, let it find you ready ; and, in the meantime, have a care to keep yourself out of their hands, who know the part you can do them in a good conjuncture, and can never but suspect your affection to be, as I am confident it is, toward your very affectionate friend,

“ CHARLES REX.”

Monk very wisely transmitted this letter, or, as it would appear, a copy of it, to Cromwell. The number of the Protector’s spies would have rendered concealment dangerous ; besides, its falling into Cromwell’s hands could little injure the cause of the exiled king, and would, on the other hand, naturally impress Cromwell with a favourable notion of Monk’s integrity.

The manner in which, by his wily conduct and pardonable dissimulation, the Restoration was effected by Monk, is, perhaps, more familiar to

the reader than any other event in our annals. "Truly," says Hobbes of Malmesbury, in his "Behemoth," "I think the bringing up of his little army entirely out of Scotland up to London was the best stratagem that is extant in history."

A greater obligation was never laid by a subject on his sovereign, neither was it meagrely nor coldly repaid. When Charles landed at Dover, Monk, who was in readiness to receive him, fell on one knee, and congratulated his Majesty on his happy return. During the king's progress to London, Monk was constantly at his side, either on horseback or in the royal coach. At Canterbury the Garter was conferred on him, the Dukes of York and Gloucester investing him with the insignia. Shortly afterward, he was sworn of the Privy Council, appointed master of the horse, a gentleman of the bedchamber, first lord of the treasury, and had apartments awarded him in the Cock-pit at Whitehall. Within a few weeks he was also created Baron Monk of Potheridge, Beauchamp, and Tees, Earl of Torrington, and Duke of Albemarle. To these honours was added a grant of seven thousand pounds a year, besides other valuable pensions and immunities. In eight years he is reported to have amassed a fortune of four hundred thousand pounds either in lands or money.

Shortly after the Restoration, Monk happened to attend the church of the famous Edmund

Monk.

Photo-etching after the painting by Werff.



Calamy, the nonconformist minister. Calamy, in his discourse, had occasion to deprecate the debasing influence of riches. "Some men," he said, "will even betray three kingdoms for filthy lucre's sake." At the same time, in order to give point to his denunciation, he threw his handkerchief, which he usually waved up and down while he was preaching, toward the general's pew.

Monk never presumed on his important services, but after the Restoration was remarkable for the same taciturnity and apparent meekness which had ever distinguished him. Charles styled him his "political father," and said of him that the Duke of Albemarle overvalued not the services of General Monk.

But prouder than his restoration of an ancient monarchy — prouder than all his victories — was his conduct during the raging of the great plague. Instead of flying, as others did, to a distant and uninfected country, — instead of mixing, as he might have done, in the ill-timed pleasures of the court at Oxford, — he remained in London in the midst of death and danger; visiting the pest-houses himself; guarding the property of the citizens; comforting the sick, and administering to their wants from his own private resources. His chaplain, Doctor Gumble, was in the metropolis during this awful period, and thus describes the scenes of which he was a witness: "Death," he says, "rode triumphant through every street, as

if it would have given no quarter to any of mankind ; and ravaged as if it would have swallowed all mortality. It was a grievous sight to see in that great emporium nothing vendible or merchantable but coffins. You should see no faces but such as were covered with terrors and horrors, many walking the streets with their sores running, and many dropping down dead at your very feet, while discoursing with them. All the music in the night was the sad sound, ‘ Bring out your dead,’ which, like dung, were thrown out into a cart, and tumbled into a pit, without numbering. The day was always summoning to our grave with knells and tolling of bells, and if we looked abroad there was nothing but cries out of houses to pray for them. It was their last request, every house marked with a ‘ Lord have mercy on us ! ’ I cannot write this without tears, much less could I see it, as I did all the time, without the greatest grief and horror ; seldom did we meet friends but it was, as it were, the last parting in this world.”

The moral effect which this gigantic disorder produced on the minds of men was not its least extraordinary feature. “ In one house,” says the same eye-witness, “ you might hear them roaring under the pangs of death ; in the next tippling, and uttering blasphemies against God ; one house shut up with a red cross, and ‘ Lord have mercy on us ! ’ the next open to all uncleanness and impiety, being senseless of the anger of God ; in the very pest-

houses such wickedness committed as is not to be named." And yet, in order that he might be of service to his fellow creatures, such scenes as these were preferred by this truly great man to the security and splendour of a court. It may be remarked, that Sheldon, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Lord Craven, the old courtier of the reign of Charles the First, and the supposed husband of the Queen of Bohemia, were his voluntary companions in the hour of danger.

Of one who displayed such high moral courage, it is needless perhaps to say that he showed equal valour on the field of battle. But Monk, under whatever circumstances, had no notion of fear. During the Protectorate,—at the time the sailors were clamouring for the payment of their prize-money, and serious riots appeared imminent,—Monk suddenly appeared among them, and, having explained the reason of the delay, passed his word for the almost immediate settlement of their claims. So far, however, were his promises from having the desired effect, that shortly afterward a formidable body of sailors, to the number of about five thousand, came threatening, and in arms, to Whitehall. Cromwell and Monk issued from the palace to meet them. Monk, in a fair and straightforward speech, reproached them warmly for distrusting his word, and renewed his promises of a speedy settlement. His remonstrances, however, again proving of no avail, and the men still main-

taining their threatening attitude, Monk suddenly drew his sword, and violently attacked those in the foremost ranks. This prompt act of gallantry had the effect of intimidating the rest, who forthwith dispersed to their homes.¹

His conduct, on the occasion of Chatham being attacked by the Dutch, affords another instance of his intrepidity. Such was the reckless temerity with which he exposed himself to the thickest of the fire, that his friends were compelled to remonstrate with him on his rashness. But all their entreaties were to no purpose. "If I had been afraid of bullets," he said, "I should have quitted the trade of a soldier long ago." On another occasion, during the famous naval engagement with the Dutch, on the first of June, 1666, "I am sure of one thing," he said, "that I shall not be taken." While the decks were being cleared for action, he had been seen to charge a pistol with powder, which it was supposed, had he been overpowered, he would have fired into the magazine, and thus have blown up himself and the ship together. This story is corroborated by the account of Sheffield, Duke Buckingham, who was by his side during the action. "Mr. Saville and I," writes the duke, "most mutinously resolved to throw

¹ As the story has been differently related, probably Monk's panegyrists have exaggerated his conduct on this occasion. According to Whitelock, it was by the Protector's guards that the rioters were dispersed.

him overboard, in case we should ever catch him going down to the powder-room."

Party prejudice has even mystified the plain character of Monk, and his virtues and his vices have been usually exaggerated, the one with overstrained praise, the other with illiberal abuse. He had certainly many valuable qualities, both of the head and heart. His temper was seldom ruffled, and he had a great command over his passions. He was a rigid disciplinarian ; exacted from every man the duty of his station ; and was a strict observer of his word. Though brave as a lion, he was extremely cautious in his undertakings, and was sparing of the blood of his followers. He was, however, too homely in his person and manners, and too cold and deliberate in his actions, to render him a popular or an interesting hero. Still, if there was nothing of romance in his disposition, there was at least nothing of the fanatic in his heart.

The capacity of Monk was not only far from brilliant, but by his contemporaries was even regarded as contemptible. Burnet saddles him with positive "stupidity ;" and Pepys, who was personally acquainted with him, styles him unequivocally a "blockhead." "Though stout," he adds, "and honest to his country, he is the heaviest man in the world." Undoubtedly he was indebted for his exalted position in the annals of his country rather to his natural good sense, and to the situation in

which accident placed him, than to any eminent mental qualifications. Diligence, taciturnity, and circumspection were the commonplace but valuable qualities to which he was indebted for his extraordinary rise.

Monk was not deficient in private virtues ; he disliked pomp, was a kind father, but a weak and too indulgent husband. He has been accused of avarice ; but the poverty to which he had been accustomed in early life had taught him an important lesson ; and, moreover, the season of his subsequent wealth was passed in an extravagant and reckless age, and in the society of prodigals by whom frugality was easily construed into a crime. Temperance has generally been numbered among his virtues, but Ludlow has thrown a doubt over his abstemiousness. “ The Companies of London,” he says, “ made a great entertainment for Monk, where the bargain they had driven with him was ratified and confirmed by dissolute and unbecoming debauchery ; for it was his custom not to depart from those public meetings till he was as drunk as a beast.” As Ludlow was unlikely to speak well of him, the accusation is probably exaggerated ; but, on the other hand, must be mentioned a hearsay of Pepys in 1666, that Monk had latterly become “ a drunken sot.” If there be any truth in the scandal, the vice was probably a failing of his later years.

In person, Monk was of middle stature, perfectly

well made, and formed for the endurance of great fatigue. His countenance was not undignified, and was chiefly expressive of good humour. He was short-sighted, but possessed an acuteness of hearing that enabled him to overhear even the softest whisper ; a valuable qualification when all around him was intrigue and false dealing. His manners are said to have been as ungraceful in a drawing-room, as his genius was commanding in a camp ; his bluntness, however, and especially his familiarity and good-nature, endeared him with the sailors, who originally gave him the name of "honest George Monk." With the soldiers he was no less popular. His chaplain Price speaks of their strong affection for him, and according to Carte, in his "Life of the Duke of Ormond," he was "the most beloved by the soldiers of any officer in the army." When the accession of Richard Cromwell was proclaimed at Edinburgh, "Why not," they said, "rather old George ? He would be fitter for a Protector than Dick Cromwell."

On the death of the Earl of Southampton, on the 16th of May, 1667, the Treasury was put in commission, and the Duke of Albemarle placed at the head of it as First Lord. But his constitution had been undermined by the fatigues and hardships of early life ; and so precarious had become the state of his health, as to render him almost incapable of performing the duties of the office.

His last illness commenced with a dropsy, which

having been neglected in the first instance, and afterward aggravated by his aversion to take physic, at length excited the most serious apprehensions of his family. Finding his health declining, he retired, for change of air, to his seat at New-Hall, in Essex. Here he was induced to make trial of a fashionable pill, which had been invented by a Doctor Sermon, of Bristol, who had served under him as a common soldier when in Scotland. The remedy for the time produced the desired effect, and he returned, with strong hopes of recovery, to his apartments at Whitehall.

These favourable symptoms, however, were of short duration. After a brief respite from suffering, he relapsed into his former state, and it became evident that his dissolution was approaching. During his illness he was constantly visited by the king and the Duke of York, who showed him the kindest and most flattering attentions.

Monk prepared himself for his end with the calmness and resignation which might have been expected from his character. The completion of a marriage between his only son Christopher, and Elizabeth, daughter of the Earl of Ogle,¹ seemed alone to bind his affections to the world, and this

¹ Henry, Earl of Ogle, son of William Cavendish, first Duke of Newcastle, whom he afterward succeeded as second duke. He married Frances, daughter of William, second son of Robert Pierpoint, Earl of Kingston. He died without leaving male issue, in 1691, when the dukedom became extinct.

favourite scheme he was happily enabled to carry into effect. Finding himself daily growing more feeble, he expressed a wish to see them united before he died, and accordingly the nuptials were performed in the chamber of the dying man, on the 30th of December, 1669, only four days before he breathed his last.

In his sickness he was attended by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, and an old friend, Dr. Seth Ward, Bishop of Salisbury, who joined him in his devotions and comforted him with spiritual consolation. The latter prelate had received many kindnesses from Monk in former days ; accordingly, now, we are told, “ he was never absent from him in his sickness ; was with him in the last moments of his life ; gave him the Holy Sacrament, closed his eyes, and preached his funeral sermon.”

Latterly, the duke’s sufferings had been increased by an asthmatic affection, which rendered the act of breathing extremely difficult. So painful was this last symptom, that he was unable to lie down on his bed, and could only enjoy occasional and broken slumbers in his chair.

His death is said to have been foretold by “a great meteor, as big as the moon.” His chaplain, Doctor Gumble, gravely tells that, though he did not witness the prodigy himself, yet it was seen by some friends of his at Chelsea ; so absurd was superstition even as late as the conclusion of the

seventeenth century. Doctor Gumble attended his patron to the end. "I discoursed with him," he says, "about his approaching death, and put him in mind of his duty; he related to me the great suppression of his spirits by a violent obstruction; but assured me that, through the mercy of God, he hoped he was as fit to die as others that might make more professions than his weak condition would suffer him.

Some other, and not uninteresting, particulars follow: "On Friday evening, the last of December, he was very uneasy in his chamber, where he used to lodge; for though he could not endure his bed, yet about ten of the clock he retired, according to his custom, and would that morning, before four of the clock (his accustomed hour being about nine in this time of sickness), return to his chamber, where he used to spend his time in the day, before any fire could be gotten there. The gentleman that then attended, came and called me out of bed, and told me in what a condition the general was. I hastened to him and found his countenance much changed; but his understanding very firm, full of smiles. He asked me what I had to do to be up so early. I informed him that I thought his time was not long in this world, and that I was come to pray with him, with which he was well pleased. I performed the office appointed by the Church for the visitation of the sick, and he made profession of his faith, and of

charity to all men. And being asked if he had settled his estate, he told me in that he had formerly given me satisfaction. He then received the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper about seven of the clock, which was on New Year's Day, the first of January, 1670."

The duke lingered two days after having received the Sacrament, dying in his chair, placidly, and without a groan, on the 3d of January, 1670, in his sixty-second year. The fanatics had long before predicted that he would not die in his bed. The fact of his departing in his chair appeared to them a sufficient, if not a triumphant, fulfilment of the prophecy.

Although the family of the deceased duke were well able to defray the expenses even of the most sumptuous funeral, Charles, from a grateful remembrance of his services, expressed his determination to honour the memory of his benefactor by a public interment, and at his own charge. After having lain in state at Somerset House for several weeks, the body, on the fourth of April, was interred, with great magnificence, on the north side of Henry the Seventh's Chapel at Westminster; the king following the procession in person. His duchess survived her husband only a few days.

The duke left only one son, Christopher, who was born in 1653, and who succeeded to his titles and vast fortune. When, according to custom, he delivered to the king the insignia of the Order of

the Garter, which had been worn by his late father, Charles gracefully returned them to the son, whom he announced as a knight of the Order. The second duke was an easy, good-natured person, as indolent in his habits as his father had been the reverse ; he exerted himself, however, during Monmouth's rebellion, and was active in raising troops against that unfortunate nobleman. He was chancellor of the University of Cambridge, a member of the privy council, and latterly governor of Jamaica, in which island he died in 1688, without leaving an heir. We have mentioned that he was married to Elizabeth, daughter of Lord Ogle, afterward Duke of Newcastle. He was at that time only in his seventeenth year. This lady was a considerable heiress, but was so peevish and ill-tempered that their union embittered his existence. In order to drown his domestic troubles in oblivion, the duke is said to have addicted himself, as a last resource, to the pleasures of the bottle. After his death his duchess publicly announced her determination to marry none but a sovereign prince. Among her suitors were the reprobate Lord Rosse, and Ralph, Lord Montagu,¹ of whom the latter proved the successful candidate. In

¹ Ralph Montagu, third Baron Montagu, ambassador to France in 1669. For his share in promoting the revolution of 1688, he was created by King William, on the 9th of April, 1689, Viscount Monthermer and Earl of Montagu. In 1705, Queen Anne advanced him to be Marquis of Monthermer and Duke of Montagu. He died in 1709.

order to flatter her insane fancies, he had courted her as Emperor of China ; a circumstance which produced the following lines from his angry competitor :

“ Insulting rival, never boast
Thy conquest lately won ;
No wonder if her heart was lost,
Her senses first were gone.

“ From one that’s under Bedlam’s laws
What glory can be had ?
For love of thee was not the cause,
It proves that she was mad.”

Of her insanity there can be no doubt ; indeed her second husband placed her in confinement. She was indulged in her fantasies, and, to the last, was served on the knee as a sovereign princess. Her principal residence was in Montagu House, which stood on the site of the present British Museum, where she occupied a suite of apartments on the ground floor. She died at Newcastle House, Clerkenwell, her paternal property, on the 28th of August, 1734, at a very advanced age.

CHAPTER III.

GEORGE VILLIERS, SECOND DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

Character of This Nobleman — His Education with the Children of Charles I. — Present at the Storming of Lichfield — His Estates Confiscated by the Parliament — His Defeat under the Earl of Holland at Nonsuch — Melancholy Death of His Younger Brother, Lord Francis Villiers — The Duke Escapes to St. Neot's — Present with Charles II. in Scotland — Escapes from the Battle of Worcester — His Subsequent Adventures — Performs the Character of a Mountebank in the Streets of London — Escapes to France — Returns Privately and Marries Fairfax's Daughter — Anger of Cromwell, Who Commits the Duke to the Tower — Released by Richard Cromwell — Honours Conferred on Buckingham at the Restoration — His Wit and Conversational Talents — Anecdotes — Instances of His Whimsical Caprice.

“A MAN so various that he seemed to be
Not one, but all mankind's epitome.
Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong,
Was everything by starts, and nothing long;
But in the course of one revolving moon,
Was chemist, fiddler, statesman, and buffoon.
Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,
Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.
Blest madman, who could every hour employ,
With something new to wish, or to enjoy !
Railing and praising were his usual themes,
And both, to show his judgment, in extremes.

So over violent, or over civil,
That every man with him was god or devil.
In squandering wealth was his peculiar art;
Nothing went unrewarded but desert.
Beggared by fools, who still he found too late,
He had his jest, and they had his estate.
He laughed himself from court: then sought relief
By forming parties, but could ne'er be chief:
For, spite of him, the weight of business fell
On Absalom and wise Achitophel:
Thus, wicked but in will, of means bereft,
He left not faction, but of that was left."

This fine poetical portrait is familiar with every one. Sketched by the hand of a great master,—one who was intimately acquainted with the features he drew,—it contains, in the most admirable verse, the nicest perception of character, the truest living resemblance of the wild, witty, and fantastical Buckingham. The portrait of the gifted and profligate visionary has been drawn by others with less beauty, but with equal truth, and even with greater severity. Destitute of all qualities which could have procured him a friend in his lifetime, he left the memory of no virtues to procure him a eulogist when he was dead. We turn with a melancholy feeling to his unprofitable career of libertinism and caprice; to the tale of extravagant frolic and unmanageable wit; of time misapplied and brilliant talents misemployed—the story of one who suffered adversity without profiting by it; who laughed at fools, yet was himself their

dupe; who ruined himself for his sovereign at one time, and plotted against him at another; who inherited a princely fortune, yet died a beggar; and lastly, who laughed at Christianity, and yet died professing his belief in its tenets. Posterity has the advantage of the moral. We learn that, without virtue or principle, even the most brilliant advantages cannot confer happiness, and that the courted and dazzling George Villiers, —

“That life of pleasure and that soul of whim, — ”

with all his splendid fortunes and envied accomplishments, died friendless, miserable, and despised.

George Villiers, the son of the great favourite, was born at Wallingford House, the site of the present Admiralty, on the 30th of January 1627. His mother was Lady Catherine Manners, sole daughter and heiress of Francis Earl of Rutland. “He inherited,” says his biographer, Fairfax, “from his father the greatest title, and from his mother the greatest estate, of any subject in England.” He was only a year old at the time of the assassination of his father. His younger brother, “the beautiful Francis Villiers,” was a posthumous child. They were educated with the children of Charles the First, and at an early age were entered at Trinity College, Cambridge.

The conduct of Buckingham in early life exhibits a striking contrast to his subsequent career.

Animated with the freshest feelings of loyalty and a desire of renown, he threw up his studies at Cambridge, and, in the height of the civil troubles, suddenly presented himself, with his young brother, in the royal camp, previous to the storming of the Close of Lichfield. The consequence of this act of loyalty was the confiscation of their estates by the Parliament, though afterward, in consideration of their being under age, they were generously restored to them. Their mother was extremely indignant with their guardian, Lord Gerard, for exposing them to such dangers. In common, however, with the rest of the world, he could not but admire their gallantry, and accordingly he told her it was their own choice, and that the greater the danger, the greater was the honour.

Shortly after this period they were transferred to the guardianship of the Earl of Northumberland, with whose permission they proceeded to France and Italy, in which countries they are said to have rivalled the sovereign princes in magnificence. They principally resided either at Rome or Florence. While at Rome, the young Duke made acquaintance with Abraham Woodhead, the well-known controversialist and champion of Popery, who became his instructor in mathematics. At a later period their former intimacy was not forgotten, and when Woodhead was deprived of his fellowship in University Col-

lege, Oxford, the Duke kindly received and maintained him at York House.

On the return of the brothers to England, in 1648, their zeal for the royal cause had in no way abated. Although Charles was then a close prisoner in the Isle of Wight, and any rising in his favour on the part of his few remaining followers must have appeared almost hopeless even to themselves, yet these gallant youths without a moment's hesitation hastened to join the standard of the unfortunate Earl of Holland, and were the first who took the field near Ryegate in Surrey. The result is well known. The earl was defeated near Nonsuch, on his retreat to Kingston; about two miles from which place the youngest of the high-spirited brothers was unfortunately slain.

The fate of one so promising and so lamented demands a passing notice. Lord Francis Villiers was but nineteen at the time of his death. His contemporaries describe him as preëminently handsome, even more strikingly so than his elder brother. Having had his horse killed under him, he made his way to an oak near the highway, where, placing his back against the tree, he disdained, or, as it has been asserted, refused to take quarter. He defended himself with a surprising gallantry,—“till,” says Fairfax, “with nine wounds in his beautiful face and body, he was slain. The oak-tree is his monument, and has the first two letters of his name, F. V., cut in it to this day.”

“A few days before his death,” adds Fairfax, “he ordered his steward, Mr. John May, to bring him in a list of his debts, and so charged his estate with them, that the Parliament, who seized on the estate, paid his debts.”

In the British Museum is preserved a curious single folio sheet, entitled “An Elegie on the untimely death of the incomparably valiant and noble Francis Lord Villiers, brother to the Duke of Buckingham, slaine by the rebels neere King-stone upon Thames, July the 7th, 1648.” It concludes :

“Hark ! from his grave his martial sprite
Your loyal valours doth excite.
On ! till a death like that I found,
Each of your conquering swords hath crown’d ;
And my glad ashes then shall rise,
And triumph in your victories.
There is no salve can cure again
Your honour’s wounds : think not you then
Gain life, when you, by flying, yield ;
But when you, dying, win the field.
This unto future times make good,
Or bear the guilt of his lost blood.”

In the British Museum, also, we find another sheet, about the size of a modern playbill, containing — “by an affectionate servant to his family, and kinsman to his person” — some other indifferent verses. They are surmounted by a woodcut of a skeleton in a recumbent posture,

with various skulls and cross-bones scattered about. According to Walker, in his "History of Independency," the "enemies' beastly usage" of his body was "not fit to be mentioned." His remains were subsequently conveyed by water to York House, in the Strand, and, having been embalmed, were interred in the same vault with those of his murdered father, in Henry the Seventh's Chapel.

In the meantime, the duke, having escaped his brother's fate, was making the best of his way toward St. Neot's. During his flight, however, he nearly lost his life by an apparently trifling accident, the circumstances of which are related by Dr. Thomas Tanner, afterward Bishop of St. Asaph, in an account of Tobias Rustat, famous for his splendid charities in the reign of Charles the Second.¹ "He [Rustat]," says the bishop, "attended the Duke of Buckingham; and was with him in the rising in Kent for King Charles the First, wherein the duke was engaged; and they, being put to the flight, the duke's helmet, by a brush under a tree, was turned upon his back, and tied so fast with a string under his throat, that without the present help of T. R., it had undoubtedly choked him, as I have credibly heard." The duke's hiding-place at St. Neot's was speedily discovered, and to his consternation he was told that the house was surrounded by soldiers. To mount

¹ Tobias Rustat was keeper of Hampton Court Palace, and Yeoman of the Robes to Charles II. He died in 1693.

his horse, and fight his way through the midst of them, appeared his only chance of escape; and, accordingly, having ordered the gate to be suddenly opened, he spurred his horse impetuously forward, and having succeeded in killing the officer who commanded the party, he fought his way through the rest, and galloped uninjured to a place of safety. Eventually he had the good fortune to join his master, Prince Charles, who was then, with the few ships under his command, cruising in the Downs. The Parliament offered him an interval of forty days to surrender, but he preferred following the fortunes of Charles, and his estates accordingly were once more confiscated. Their yearly value is said to have amounted to twenty-five thousand pounds, an enormous income at the period.

Such was George Villiers at the age of twenty-one! Had his career terminated at this period, or had his future conduct in any degree corresponded with his early excellency, he would have bequeathed a proud name to posterity. His personal valour established beyond all question; relinquishing, on account of conscientious principles, unbounded wealth and an envied position in society; cheerfully sharing the broken fortunes of his royal master in a foreign and inhospitable land; it would have been difficult to point out a nobler example of youthful chivalry and disinterestedness.

The duke had still one friend remaining in his native country. This person was one John Traylman, probably an old retainer of his father, who, after the duke's flight, had been permitted to remain unmolested at York House. The faithful old man not only found means to secure the splendid collection of pictures which had been purchased by the late duke in Italy, but contrived to forward them to his young master at Antwerp. For some time, all that Buckingham had left to maintain himself with was derived from the sale of this collection.

When Charles the Second was invited to Scotland by his northern subjects, the duke was the only personal friend who was allowed to remain with him. Wearied by long sermons, and surrounded by sour faces, the gay monarch and his reckless friend are said, by their hearty laughter and merry ridicule of their puritanical friends, to have amply repaid themselves at night for the dullness and restraint to which they had been exposed during the day. About this period Buckingham had the offer of compounding his vast estates for 20,000*l.*; a compromise, however, which he unhesitatingly declined.

The young duke was present at the battle of Worcester, where he fought side by side with the king. After the loss of that famous engagement he became a fugitive like his master, and encountered almost as many straits as Charles him-

self. Leaving the king at Boscobel, he rode northward with the Earls of Derby and Lauderdale, and Lord Talbot, in hopes of overtaking General Lesley and the Scottish horse. No sooner, however, had the fugitives reached the highroad than their perils commenced. Scarcely had they succeeded in defeating a small body of the rebels under Colonel Blundel, when they were encountered by an overwhelming force, under the command of Colonel Lilburn. Buckingham, Lord Leviston, and a few others, by abandoning their horses, and quitting the highroad, contrived to make their escape, and subsequently arrived in safety at a place called Bloore Park, about five miles from Newport. Here, in an obscure house belonging to a Mr. George Barlow, the duke fortunately obtained refreshment and a hiding-place. His stay, however, was necessarily brief; and accordingly, having left his "George," the gift of Henrietta Maria, in charge of a companion, he disguised himself in a labourer's attire, and, under the conduct of one Nicholas Matthews, a carpenter, departed for Bilstrop, in Nottinghamshire, where he was heartily welcomed by one Mr. Hawley, a staunch cavalier. From hence he proceeded to the house of his relative, Lady Villiers, at Brooksby, in Leicestershire, and after having encountered numerous hardships, eventually arrived in safety at London.

Under circumstances of difficulty and danger,

and with the prospect of a death on a scaffold, any other but this whimsical nobleman would have contented himself with a garret till the storm had blown over, and till the means of escape presented themselves. But solitude and confinement were ill-suited to the mercurial mind of Buckingham. He actually assumed the dress of a mountebank, and in this character daily performed his antics in the public streets, constantly meeting his enemies face to face, and agreeably amusing the citizens of London by his drollery and wit. According to Madame Dunois, — whose details, however, must be received with considerable caution, — “He caused himself to be made a Jack Pudding’s coat, a little hat, with a fox’s tail in it, and adorned with cock’s feathers. Sometimes he appeared in a wizard’s mask ; sometimes he had his face bedaubed with flour, sometimes with lampblack, as the fancy took him. He had a stage erected at Charing Cross, where he was attended by violins and puppet-players. Every day he produced ballads of his own composition upon what passed in town, wherein he himself often had a share. These he sung before several thousands of spectators, who every day came to see and hear him. He also sold mithridate and his galbanum plaster in this great city, in the midst of his enemies, whilst we were obliged to fly, and to conceal ourselves in some hole or other.”

Eventually, Buckingham contrived to reach

France in safety ; and, having enlisted into the service of the French monarch, added not a little to his character for gallantry at the sieges of Arras and Valenciennes.

During his exile, Buckingham had entertained the romantic project of winning the hand of the only daughter of the Parliamentary general, Lord Fairfax ; trusting by this means to recover a portion of his hereditary estates, a considerable part of which had been ceded to that nobleman.¹ An additional inducement was the fact of Fairfax having handed over to the celebrated Countess of Derby the rents of the Isle of Man, which had been recently wrested from the Stanleys, and conferred by the Parliament on their general. The task, however, was by no means either safe or easy to perform. In addition to the ordinary difficulties of espousing a young lady whom he had never seen, his life, or most certainly his liberty, would have been sacrificed, had he fallen into the hands of Cromwell. To a mind, however, constituted like that of Buckingham, and warmed by the romance of six-and-twenty, the more hazardous the adventure the more likely was it to be undertaken. Despising, therefore, the many dangers and obstacles that presented themselves, Buckingham, wearied with poverty and exile, determined on returning secretly to London. Unfortunately,

¹ According to Heath, the share which was awarded to Fairfax out of the duke's estates, was as much as four thousand a year.

he was wanting even in common prudence ; and, consequently, so carelessly had he kept his secret, that his project seems to have transpired even before he set foot in England. Colonel Wogan writes to Major-General Massey, 19th June, 1653 : “The Duke of Buckingham has gone for Calais, and it is thought he will go for England.” And again, in an intercepted letter, dated the following day, we find : “I am credibly informed that the Duke of Buckingham hath been sent for to come over, and is to marry Sir Thomas Fairfax’s daughter.” As Cromwell’s was a vigilance by no means easy to be eluded, he could scarcely have been ignorant of Buckingham’s visit to England ; indeed, as the marriage did not take place till three months after his arrival, the fact of the duke not having been arrested appears altogether unaccountable.

Probably, the heart of Fairfax already warmed toward the young duke. He was a man who had many of the prejudices of the aristocracy, of which he was by birth a member ; he was descended, as was also Buckingham, by the female line from the Rutland family ; and, moreover, he was probably not a little gratified at the prospect of so brilliant an alliance. Among other property of the Villiers, which had been assigned to him, was York House, in the Strand. In this noble mansion, every chamber, we are told, was “adorned with the arms of Villiers and Manners, lions and peacocks.” In addition to these circumstances, Fairfax was by no

means an avaricious man, and, by his behaviour to Lady Derby, appears to have entertained some conscientious doubts as to the legality of his claims to the estates with which the Parliament had rewarded his services. At all events, the project appeared feasible to Buckingham; the lady was not without personal advantages, and he was certain to find a liberal father-in-law.

Whether the duke and Fairfax had been hitherto personally acquainted with each other,—a fact which appears highly improbable,—or in what manner Buckingham managed to obtain an introduction, it is now impossible to ascertain. Fairfax, at all events, appears to have listened eagerly to his proposals, and the lady, we are informed, could not resist his charms, “being the most graceful and beautiful person that any court in Europe ever saw.” They were accordingly married, on the 7th of September, 1657, at Nun Appleton, near York, a seat of Lord Fairfax.

Cromwell, who was supposed to have intended Buckingham for one of his own daughters, was greatly enraged when he heard of the match, and immediately committed Buckingham to the Tower. Fairfax demanded his release, which being angrily and obstinately refused by the Protector, a quarrel was the consequence.

The following is the entry in the Council Books, on the receipt of Fairfax's Memorial in favour of his son-in-law.

“AT THE COUNCIL AT WHITEHALL.

“Tuesday, 17th November, 1657.

“His Highness having communicated to the Council that the Lord Fairfax made address to him, with some desires on behalf of the Duke of Buckingham: Ordered, that the resolves and Act of Parliament, in the case of the said duke, be communicated to the Lord Fairfax, as the grounds of the Council's proceedings touching the said duke; and that there be withal signified to the Lord Fairfax, the Council's civil respects to his Lordship's own person. That the Earl of Mulgrave, the Lord Deputy Fleetwood, and the Lord Strickland, be desired to deliver a message from the Council to the Lord Fairfax, to the effect aforesaid.

“HENRY SCOBELL, Clerk of the Council.”

On the accession of Richard Cromwell, Buckingham was allowed to remove to Windsor Castle, where Cowley the poet, with whom he had formerly been acquainted at Cambridge, became his constant companion.

The only other notice we find of Buckingham at this period is in a letter from a Mr. Corker to Secretary Thurloe: “This last week,” writes the former, “Padden and another was with the Duke of Buckingham at Windsor, who told them there was a petition presented unto the council about his release: he hoped it might take effect,

but if not, he would endeavour his escape. He acquainted them with the manner of it, and they are desiring my assistance in it, and alleging how beneficial it would be to me. And truly the design is so well laid, that in my judgment it cannot well miscarry. I cannot conveniently make known to you the particulars in writing, but shall do either to yourself or Mr. Morland, as soon as I am able to stir out of my chamber."

Previous to Richard's abdication, Buckingham was finally released; an event which is thus announced in the *Mercurius Politicus*:

"February 21, 1658-9.—The humble petition of George Duke of Buckingham was this day read. Resolved, that George Duke of Buckingham, now prisoner at Windsor Castle, upon his engagement upon his honour at the bar of this House, and upon the engagement of Lord Fairfax, in twenty thousand pounds, that the said duke shall peaceably demean himself for the future, and shall not join with, or abet, or have any correspondence with, any of the enemies of the Lord Protector, and of this Commonwealth, in any of the parts beyond the sea, or within this Commonwealth, shall be discharged of his imprisonment and restraint; and that the Governor of Windsor Castle be required to bring the said Duke of Buckingham to the bar of this House on Wednesday next, to engage his honour accordingly. Ordered, that the security of twenty thou-

sand pounds to be given by the Lord Fairfax, on the behalf of the Duke of Buckingham, be taken in the name of his Highness the Lord Protector."

One of the few happy traits in Buckingham's character was the art of accommodating his habits and powers of conversation to the society of others. During his sojourn with his Presbyterian father-in-law at Nun Appleton,—whither he returned after his discharge from Windsor,—he appears to have conformed to the regular habits of Fairfax; to have "lived orderly and soberly with his wife;" and, indeed, to have subsided into the quiet character of a country gentleman. Only a few months afterward, we find him the most reckless, unprincipled, and irregular character at the court of Charles.

At the Restoration Buckingham recovered his property, besides receiving other proofs of the royal favour. He was made a lord of the bedchamber, a member of the privy council, and afterward master of the horse, and lord lieutenant of Yorkshire. For some time he lived in considerable splendour at Wallingford House, but falling into the hands of gamesters and usurers, his estate, within a few years, suffered almost as miserably as his reputation.

No one, however, shone with greater advantage at the profligate court of Charles. Besides his wit and personal beauty, he was considered, in riding, dancing, and fencing, the most accom-

plished man of his age. "When he came into the presence-chamber," we are told, "he moved so gracefully, that it was impossible not to follow him with your eye as he went along." "I think," says Sir John Reresby, "that both for person and wit the duke was the finest gentleman I ever saw." The praise of Madame Dunois is still warmer. "No man," she says, "was ever handsomer, or more nicely made, and there was something so engaging in his conversation, as made him more pleasing by his wit than by his person. His words pierced the heart, and he was born for gallantry and magnificence, in both which he surpassed all the lords of the English court." De Grammont alludes to Buckingham's accomplishments in more measured language. "He was extremely handsome," he says, "but thought himself much more so than he really was."

Although the wit of Buckingham will, probably, live for ever in the pages of "The Rehearsal," of his conversational humour, once so famous, we find but scattered instances. The following, however, affords no indifferent specimen of the quick turn of his fancy. In a play of Dryden's, there was a line which the actress endeavoured to pronounce in as moving and affecting a manner as possible :

" My wound is great because it is so small — "

She then paused and looked much distressed ; Buckingham, whose person was of course well known to the house, happened to be in one of the boxes, and, rising from his seat, added in a ridiculing tone :

“ Then 'twould be greater were it none at all.”

This ludicrous completion of the couplet produced such an effect on the audience, that they hissed the poor woman off the stage, and refused to permit her reappearance during the remainder of the performance.

Wherever Buckingham presented himself, wit, frolic, and buffoonery were sure to have the ascendant. The more exalted the personage, the more serious the subject, and the more solemn the occasion, the more certain was it to provoke his merriment and ridicule. The king himself was as much exposed to his jests as was his humblest courtier ; and the fortunes of his enemy, Clarendon, were apparently ruined by the systematic ribaldry with which he persecuted the grave lord chancellor. Buckingham's mimicry was irresistible, and when he imitated the stately walk of that solemn personage,—a pair of bellows hanging before him for the purse, and Colonel Titus preceding him with a fire-shovel on his shoulders, by way of mace—the king and his courtiers are described as convulsed with laughter. Buckingham's example was of course fol-

lowed by others, and when the chancellor passed by, the ladies of the court used to touch the king: "There," said they, "goes your schoolmaster." Clarendon himself alludes with bitterness to this unlicensed buffoonery.

A scene of irreverent gaiety, of which Buckingham was the promoter, is described as having taken place in the Chapel Royal. The preacher was a young man, with sufficient modesty to feel nervous at his situation: indeed, so overpowering was his bashfulness, as to produce an unpleasant flow of perspiration, to relieve himself from which he kept constantly wiping his face with his hand. As he unfortunately wore a pair of black gloves, the dye from them was communicated to his face. The text which he chose for his sermon was an unlucky one. He selected the fourteenth verse of the 139th Psalm, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made." The contrast between the preacher's appearance and his words was too ludicrous not to strike Buckingham, who burst into a fit of laughter, in which he was joined by Sir Henry Bennet, and those who were near him. At last the contagion reached the king himself, who, unable to keep his countenance, shared the laugh with the rest.

The description which Buckingham gave of Ipswich to the king, is amusing enough. "It was a town," he said, "without inhabitants, a river without water, streets without names, and where the asses wore boots." He alluded, in the two last

instances, to the town being divided into parishes instead of streets, and to the asses employed in rolling Lord Hereford's bowling-green having boots on their feet, to prevent their injuring the turf.

Of his whimsical caprice, so happily satirised by Dryden, of the thousand fancies, intended as sources either of profit or pleasure, which he daily fostered in his vacillating mind, it would not be difficult to afford an illustration. A taste for chemistry appears to have continued the longest, but it was connected, it seems, with some idle expectations of discovering the philosopher's stone.

Another of his extravagances was a love of building. When his friends endeavoured to dissuade him from contracting so expensive an amusement, he persisted in calling it his "folly."¹ To the puritanical party, which was still numerous in England, he even gave hopes of becoming a devotee. Lady Sunderland writes to Lord Halifax, 8th July, 1680: "The Duke of Buckingham very lately pretended to have some trouble of conscience, and talked of it to some fanatics; and they said he appeared to be in a good mind, and they were to come to him again to finish the work; at the time appointed he could not be found, and

¹ The duke probably alluded to a gay and fantastical-looking vessel called the *Folly*, — the resort of the fashionable idlers in the reign of Charles II., — which was formerly moored opposite the royal palace at Whitehall.

afterward they heard he was with a wench all that day."

In 1676, among other projects of repairing his ruined fortunes, we find him establishing a glass manufactory at Lambeth. Evelyn, who paid it a visit, remarks, "that the mirrors were far larger and better than those brought from Venice." He mentions also "huge vases of metal, as clear, ponderous, and thick as crystal." Another of the duke's fancies was to obtain a military command : "Charles," says Dalrymple, in his memoirs, "duped Buckingham of his expectation of commanding six thousand English forces against Holland, by prevailing upon France not to ask them ;" and Colbert writes, 4th November, 1671, that "on this account Buckingham refused to go to court when sent for." However, in 1672, previous to the arrival of the Duke of Schomberg in England, we find him actually in command of the new-raised forces encamped on Blackheath. For some reason his military employment was extremely brief, and, on the arrival of Schomberg, he quitted the service.

At the breaking out of the Dutch war in 1665, Buckingham gave another instance of his restless and versatile disposition, by applying for the command of a ship. As he was a mere landsman, wholly ignorant of naval tactics, the application met with anything but cordiality. With a large ship it was thought unadvisable to trust him, and

to command a mere sloop or gun-brig would have been derogatory to his rank and station. Accordingly, he embarked as a volunteer on board the flag-ship, the captain of which happened to be his acquaintance. But here a new difficulty arose. In his capacity of a privy councillor he demanded to be present during all councils of war, a claim which the Duke of York, then admiral of the fleet, partly from personal dislike, and partly from an unwillingness to establish an inconvenient precedent, positively refused to admit. Buckingham accordingly left the fleet in disgust, and returned to the court.

CHAPTER IV.

GEORGE VILLIERS, SECOND DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

Buckingham's Conspiracy against Charles II.—Proclamation Issued for His Apprehension—Conceals Himself in London—Surrenders Himself to the Lieutenant of the Tower—His Conduct at His Examination—Pardoned by Charles—Buckingham's Quarrel with Lord Ossory—His Late Hours—His Fray with Lord Dorchester—Kills the Earl of Shrewsbury in a Duel—His Intrigue with the Countess of Shrewsbury—The Duke's Seat at Cliveden—Sent on a Mission to France—Anecdote—Again in Disgrace at Court—Sent to the Tower—Witty Reply to Lord Shaftesbury—Retires from Court at the Death of Charles II.—His Vast Debts—Amusing Controversy with Father Petre—His Last Moments and Death—Character of Buckingham.

MOST men have some particular aim, some settled object in existence, which is expected to confer happiness in the end. But the mind of Buckingham shifted with every wind. His imagination was a harlequinade of tinsel fancies, and, whether as the adviser of his sovereign, or whether leagued with levellers and fanatics, whether as the philosopher or the rake, as the man of leisure, the man of business, or the man of science, we find him equally versatile, capricious, and unprincipled to the last.

On a mind so constituted, not all the smiles of fortune nor of his sovereign were sufficient to confer happiness; and, consequently, in March, 1667, we find him deeply engaged in a formidable conspiracy against the person and government of his good-natured sovereign, who, moreover, had been his earliest friend. Singular as it may appear, we cannot doubt but that he was influenced in his shameful conduct by the idle predictions of a mountebank astrologer — “a poor fellow,” says Clarendon, “who had a poorer lodging somewhere about Tower Hill, and who professed knowledge in horoscopes or judicial astrology, and had, from a calculation of the duke’s nativity, foretold him that he would be king.” Thus can the finest intellect be perverted! Rochester practised astrology to support his well-known mountebank jest; Buckingham, on the other hand, believed in its absurdities, and his credulity nearly led him to the block.

Charles, notwithstanding his easy temper, his love for the companion of his childhood, and the natural forgivingness of his disposition, must have been deeply hurt and exasperated when the duke’s treason was first announced to him. In one of the earliest numbers of the *London Gazette*¹ we find a curious and interesting document, — the proclamation issued for Buckingham’s apprehension. After the usual preamble, it sets forth,

¹ March 7, 1666-7. No. 138.

“that forasmuch as the said duke, who was of H. M. privy council, and otherwise employed in great trust relating to H. M. person and the public, and not only bound by common duty and allegiance, but further obliged by especial and extraordinary ties of gratitude and fidelity to the crown hath, notwithstanding, held and maintained secret correspondence by letters and other transactions, tending to raise mutinies in some of H. M. forces, and stir up sedition among his people, and other traitorous designs and practices: and whereas for the prevention of the mischievous consequences that might thereupon ensue, especially as the present state of affairs now are, and intending the matter be examined, and the said duke brought to answer what should be objected against him, his Majesty gave orders to one of H. M. sergeants-at-arms to use all diligence to apprehend him: in execution of which command H. M. minister was ill-treated and contemptuously resisted, not without the knowledge of the said duke himself, as H. M. has just cause to believe, and he, as conscious of his demerits, secretly escaped.” The proclamation then proceeds to issue the necessary directions to all “justices of the peace, mayors, sheriffs, etc., to use their best endeavours to apprehend the said duke;” declaring that “if any person or persons, after the publication thereof, shall directly or indirectly conceal the said duke, or shall not use their best

endeavours for his discovery and apprehension, they shall be proceeded against with all severity."

Buckingham, it would seem, on his treasonable designs having been discovered, concealed himself, in the first instance, in his house at Westhorp. Sir John Reresby was sheriff of Yorkshire at the time, and as the duke was an influential person, and had formerly shown him civility, he was placed in a disagreeable dilemma. "I confess," he says, "I was at a loss to know how to act in this matter, between the obligation of my office as sheriff, and the respect I had for the duke; but the judges coming down to the assizes, advised me by all means to proclaim the order for his apprehension, which I did, and it for ever after lessened me in the esteem of that lord." One Sergeant Bearcroft was sent to Westhorp to arrest him. Pepys was informed by this person that a few miles from the place he was "overtaken and out-rid" by the Duchess of Buckingham, who appears to have arrived at Westhorp about a quarter of an hour before him. Accordingly on reaching the house he found the doors closed against him. The next day, however, having reinforced himself with the officers of the neighbouring town, he paid a second visit. On this occasion he was permitted to search the house, but the duke had apparently effected his escape during the night.

For some time afterward, it was supposed that

Buckingham was in France; it seems, however, that from the period of his flight to the day of his surrender,—from the beginning of March to the end of June,—he was concealed principally in London. He was so admirably disguised, that although taken into custody two or three times by the watch for being in the streets at unseasonable hours, they had no conception of his real rank. Eventually, wearied perhaps with playing hide-and seek, and probably having received secret intimation from his friends at court that he would be treated with much more leniency than he deserved, he sent a message to the lieutenant of the Tower, intimating that he had made up his mind to surrender himself, and that the lieutenant might expect him after he had dined. The same night, after having passed the evening at a tavern, where he is described as having been “mighty merry,” he presented himself at the gates of the Tower, and was conducted to the apartments which had been prepared for his reception.

After a detention of a few days, Buckingham was brought before the council, and examined in the presence of the king. His manner, during the investigation, though conciliating and even submissive toward Charles, was sufficiently haughty both to the chancellor and Lord Arlington, the latter of whom conducted the prosecution. One of the charges preferred against him was an undue attempt to obtain the favour of the people. “A

person," said Buckingham, with his usual wit, "has only to be committed to prison by my lord chancellor or my Lord Arlington, and there is little doubt of his becoming popular."

Though he remanded him to the Tower, the good-natured monarch was too fond of ease and of the society of Buckingham, not to relent as soon as forgiveness appeared decent. Accordingly, in the *Gazette* for September following, we find another and very different proclamation to the previous one: "His Majesty was graciously pleased to declare in Council, that upon the humble submission of the Duke of Buckingham, His Majesty had received him in his favour, and it was H. M. pleasure he should be restored to his place in the Council and in the Bedchamber: Whereupon His Grace was immediately called in, and having kissed H. M. hand, took his place at the Board accordingly." In a few days, the affair, for less than which Russell and Sidney lost their heads, was in all probability made a jest of, —

"in the ring
Of mimic statesmen and their merry king."

That Charles, however, was at first highly enraged with Buckingham, there can be no doubt; indeed, Clarendon, with his knowledge of the king's character, would scarcely have risked irrecoverably exasperating the implacable duke, had he not been firmly persuaded that his ruin was in

evitable. Buckingham's release from the Tower had even at first been refused by Charles to the tears of the Duchess of Cleveland. They parted with words which might astonish the uninitiated ; the king calling her Grace a jade who meddled with affairs with which she had nothing to do, and the spoiled beauty denouncing the king as a fool for not knowing who were his real friends. An estrangement of two or three days was the consequence of this lovers' quarrel. Pepys tells us that the king did not "come near her;" but it is far more likely that the lady affected to be the party aggrieved, and refused to admit the visits of her royal lover. It was a stratagem which she not unfrequently practised in order to obtain a compliance with her unreasonable demands ; and consequently, not improbably the price of reconciliation paid by Charles on this occasion was Buckingham's pardon.

Buckingham had scarcely been released from prison more than two or three days, when we find him taking away the sword of Henry Killebrew at the duke's theatre, and giving him so sound a beating that he shouted for his life. The punishment was probably deserved, inasmuch as Pepys tells us that the duke carried himself "very innocently and well." He remarks, too, "how pretty it was to hear how people do speak kindly of the Duke of Buckingham, as one that will inquire into faults."

“Continual wine, women, and music,” says Butler, “had debauched the duke’s understanding;” but whether or not this were the case, they certainly seem to have affected his courage. That he was naturally brave his behaviour in early life affords sufficient evidence; but with the return of prosperity he became one of the worst description of quarrelsome characters, a man who will insult another with the predetermined to deny him satisfaction. Certainly his conduct to Lord Ossory, the eldest son of the Duke of Ormond, was neither that of a brave nor of an honourable man. The dispute between them arose in the House of Lords, in 1666, on the question of prohibiting the importation of Irish cattle into England. Alluding to the likelihood of the bill being thrown out from motives of self-interest on the part of the Irish land-holders, it was remarked by Buckingham, with great severity, that “whoever should vote against it must either have an Irish heart or an Irish understanding.” Lord Ossory, who seems on previous occasions to have been a sufferer from the duke’s unsparing wit, looked upon the affront as personal to himself, and, consequently, taking the first opportunity of motioning Buckingham to follow him into another room, he peremptorily demanded a “meeting.” Buckingham at first endeavoured to turn the matter into a joke; Ossory, however, persisting in bringing him to the point, the duke was at length constrained to seriousness, and accord-

ingly it was agreed that they should cross swords at a certain well-known spot in Chelsea fields. Thither Ossory repaired at the appointed hour, but Buckingham not making his appearance, and a party turning off the high road (for the purpose, as Ossory supposed, of preventing the encounter), he returned disappointed to London. The duke all this time appears to have been stationed on the opposite side of the river, which he afterward pretended to have understood to be the place fixed upon for the meeting.

It was strongly suspected, at the time, that the party which had disturbed Lord Ossory had been sent by Buckingham for the express purpose of arresting his adversary. Whatever truth there may have been in this report, it is certain that Buckingham's subsequent conduct afforded strong grounds for suspicion. Rising the next morning from his seat in the House of Lords, he detailed with the most admirable nonchalance, and that easy matter-of-course style so peculiarly his own, the whole of the circumstances connected with the projected duel. Lord Ossory, as he sat listening to the statement, is said to have been utterly confounded by the impudence of his adversary. Buckingham, having expressed his conviction that sooner or later their lordships must have been made aware of the facts, professed, as if in candour, his intention to have met Ossory, had not a misunderstanding — the circumstances of which he detailed — arisen to

prevent their encounter. He added that, as the expressions complained of had been used in the course of debate, he might honourably have declined to give the meeting required ; and concluded, in the same off-hand manner, by speaking of his reputation for personal courage as being placed beyond question, and of duelling itself as a pastime he rather courted for its amusement than shunned for the danger it entailed.

Lord Ossory, in reply, admitted the principal facts of the case. He expressed his surprise, however, at the statement of his adversary that the challenge had originated in words spoken in the house ; adding that he had explicitly declared to him “that he did not question him for words spoken in Parliament, but for words spoken in other places, which he had at other times chosen to hear, rather than disturb the company.”

As soon as the two lords had concluded their several statements, and, according to custom, had been directed to withdraw, the peers commenced discussing the merits of the case. Whoever might have been in the wrong, the majority were evidently prejudiced in favour of Buckingham. Much was said respecting the freedom of debate, and it was insisted that, if that freedom was infringed, it was the bounden duty of the house to restrain and punish the offenders. Unfortunately for Lord Ossory, it was remembered that he had recently reproached Lord Ashley, in no measured terms,

for having been a councillor of Cromwell, and in consequence had narrowly escaped the censure of the house. This new offence, therefore, was declared to be "notorious and monstrous," while the Duke of Buckingham—who was said on all occasions to have paid every possible respect and reverence to the house—was complimented as having "carried himself as well as the ill-custom and iniquity of the age would admit."

In the meantime, however, it had suggested itself to the duke's friends, who were in the House,—that if all the censure and punishment were allowed to fall upon his adversary, it would amount to a tacit acknowledgement that, however meritoriously Buckingham might have conducted himself as a peacemaker, his character for courage had no less sunk in the scale. These tactics were sufficiently obvious to the duke's enemies, who accordingly insisted that, as he had been guilty of no offence, he ought to receive no punishment. The debate eventually terminated by Ossory's friends being worsted, and by both the offenders being sent to the Tower.

It was no slight compliment to Buckingham's eloquence that the Irish bill was allowed to remain in suspense during his imprisonment; its advocates declining to risk the chance of a defeat while the duke's oratorical powers were not present to throw their weight in the scale. There can be no question, indeed, that had Buckingham pos-

sessted half as much stability and application as he was gifted with genius, he might have been the first statesman in the country. Even his enemy, Clarendon, does justice to his capacity. Of the duke's parliamentary influence he says: "It cannot be imagined, considering the loose life he led, which was a life more by night than by day, in all the liberties that nature could devise or wit invent, how great an interest he had in both houses of Parliament; that is, how many in both would follow his advice, and concur in what he proposed. His quality and condescensions, the pleasantness of his humour and conversation, the extravagance and sharpness of his wit, unrestrained by any modesty or religion, drew persons of all affections and inclinations to like his company; and to believe that the levities and the vanities would be wrought off by age, and there would enough of good be left to become a great man." The bench of bishops appear to have been frequent sufferers from his wit. Andrew Marvell writes, in a letter dated 24th July, 1675: "Never were poor men exposed and abused all the session, as the bishops were by the Duke of Buckingham upon the Test; never the like, nor so infinitely pleasant; and no men were ever grown so odiously ridiculous." The illustrious patriot seems entirely to have lost sight of his dislike of Buckingham's character, in his delight at the discomfiture which the duke inflicted on the bishops.

His habit of keeping late hours, alluded to by Lord Clarendon, was pretty notorious at the time. In a lampoon of the period, entitled "The Queries and Answers from Garraway's Coffee-house," we find :

" *Q.* — When shall Don Carlos be made a lord ?

" *A.* — About two o'clock in the morning, when the Duke of Buckingham has dined."

Reresby also says that he used to turn day into night and night into day, and Butler attacks his irregularities with his usual severity. " He rises," he says, " eats, and goes to bed by the Julian account, long after all others that go by the New Style, and keeps the same hours with owls and the antipodes."

Not long after his affair with Lord Ossory, we find Buckingham engaged in a still more disgraceful quarrel with Lord Dorchester. The circumstances of the squabble, which took place in a conference between the two houses on the Canary question, are amusingly described in the quaint language of Pepys. " My Lord Buckingham," he says, " leaning rudely over my Lord Marquis Dorchester, my Lord Dorchester removed his elbow. Duke of Buckingham asked whether he was uneasy; Dorchester replied, yes, and that he durst not do this were he anywhere else. Buckingham replied, yes he would, and that he was a better man than himself. Dorchester said that he lied. With this Buckingham struck off

his hat and took him by his periwig and pulled it aside, and held him. My lord chamberlain and others interfered, and upon coming into the House of Lords did order them to the Tower, whither they are to go this afternoon."

These visits to the Tower must have been rather expensive to Buckingham, inasmuch as the lieutenant told Pepys that the day's work would be worth as much as three hundred and fifty pounds to him. Buckingham, owing to his well-known hostility to Lord Clarendon, was at this time extremely popular with the citizens, and, consequently, as he passed through the streets to the Tower, he was loudly cheered by the rabble. Both he and Lord Dorchester were released after a few days. Clarendon says, "the marquis had much of the duke's hair in his hands to recompense for pulling off his periwig, which he could not reach high enough to do to the other." On the 3d of March, 1669, we find Buckingham engaged in another quarrel; Sir William Coventry being turned out of all his employments for challenging him to single combat.

It was about a year previous to this last event, that Buckingham's intimacy with the Countess of Shrewsbury¹ led to his famous duel with her hus-

¹ Anna Maria, eldest daughter of Robert Brudenel, Earl of Cardigan. She married, first, Francis, Earl of Shrewsbury, by whom she had two surviving sons, Charles, afterward Duke of Shrewsbury, and John, killed in a duel, in 1686, by Henry, Duke

band,¹ which was fought in a close near Barn-Elms, on the 17th of January, 1668. The seconds of the Duke of Buckingham were two persons named Holmes and Jenkins, probably two of his creatures. The seconds of the Earl of Shrewsbury were Sir John Talbot, a gentleman of the privy chamber, and Bernard Howard, a son of the Earl of Arundel. The duel was one of the most remarkable on record. In the encounter, in which the whole of these six persons engaged, not one escaped unhurt; Jenkins was killed on the spot; Sir John Talbot received a severe wound in his arm, and Shrewsbury, who was run through the body from the right breast to the shoulder, died of his wounds on the 16th of March following. Spence relates, on the authority of Pope, that the whole of the morning the countess

of Grafton. Some years after the death of the earl, she married George Rodney Bridges, Esq., of Hampshire, by whom also she left one son, who bore the names of his father, and died in 1751. The countess herself died on the 20th of April, 1702.

¹ Francis Talbot, eleventh Earl of Shrewsbury. His first wife, by whom he had one daughter, was Anne, daughter of Sir John Conyers, of the county of Durham, knight. He died on the 16th of March, 1668. Charles, his successor in the title, appears to have been little affected either by the death of his father, or the profligacy of his mother.

"In Shrewsbury we find
A generous mind,
So kindly to live with his mother
And never try yet
To avenge the sad fate
Of his father and only brother."

was trembling for her gallant, and that afterward the Duke passed the night with her in his bloody shirt. It has even been asserted that, during the encounter, she held the duke's horse in the dress of a page.

Her husband had scarcely been dead two months when Buckingham carried his worthless paramour to his own home. His duchess, highly and justly exasperated, insisted how impossible it was that she could live with her rival under the same roof. "So I thought, madam," was the bitter reply, "and have therefore ordered your coach to convey you to your father." It was said that the duke's chaplain, Doctor Sprat, was actually induced to marry him to the countess; an absurd and useless ceremony, considering that Buckingham's lawful wife was still alive. The latter was afterward styled, by the courtiers, the duchess dowager.

In a letter from Mr. Henshaw to Sir Robert Paston, dated 15th October, 1670, the countess is reported to be with child by her paramour, and in a letter of Andrew Marvell's, dated 9th August, 1671, we find the rumour not only corroborated, but illustrated by some curious matter. "Buckingham," he writes, "runs out of all with the Lady Shrewsbury, by whom he believes he had a son, to whom the king stood godfather; it died young, Earl of Coventry, and was buried in the sepulchre of his fathers." The fact is equally as

remarkable as disgraceful that Charles should have consented to stand sponsor to the child, and that Buckingham should have conferred on it his second title of Earl of Coventry.

As we find Colbert, the French ambassador, considering it worth his while to make Lady Shrewsbury his friend for political purposes, she possessed probably considerable influence over her profligate lover. There is evidence in the Frenchman's despatches, not only that Lord Arlington proposed to the French court that they should confer a pension on Lady Shrewsbury, in order to fix Buckingham in their interests ; but, on the 1st January, 1671, Colbert writes that he has actually presented Lady Shrewsbury with ten thousand livres. He adds, on the 9th of November following, that on Lady Shrewsbury receiving the French pension, she said, "she would make Buckingham comply with King Charles in all things."

In the early years of their intercourse Buckingham and his mistress passed much of their time in the delightful seclusion of Cliveden, near Maidenhead :

"Gallant and gay in Cliveden's proud alcove,
The bower of wanton Shrewsbury and love."

As this place has become as celebrated from the poetry of Pope, as from having been the retreat of Buckingham, an extract from a scarce work, describing it as it appeared to the traveller

at the commencement of the last century, may not be unacceptable. “This palace,” says the writer, “is situated on the top of a hill, washed with the Thames, five miles west from Windsor, and overlooks all the country around it. It is a noble building *à la moderne*. The great terrace, which fronts the garden, with the parterre, are well disposed. Under the terrace are twenty-six niches, in which the Duke of Buckingham designed to place statues bigger than the life; and in the middle a pretty alcove, with stone stairs, which ascends to the apartments.”

The circumstance is undoubtedly to the credit of the times, that the duke’s disreputable intercourse with Lady Shrewsbury was publicly denounced in Parliament. “His Grace,” says Reresby, “was called to the bar of the House of Peers, for scandalously living with Lady Shrewsbury as man and wife, he being a married man; and for having killed my Lord Shrewsbury, after he had debauched his wife.” Reresby has unfortunately neglected to inform us of the result of this extraordinary proceeding.

In 1670, the duke became one of that celebrated council of state, known under the name of the Cabal. In the course of the same year, he was sent ambassador to France; ostensibly to condole with the French court on the death of the Duchess of Orleans, but in reality to concert secret measures for breaking the Triple League.

At Paris he was received with great ceremony and splendour. His wit and fine person elicited general admiration, and Louis the Fourteenth observed that he was almost the only English gentleman he had ever seen. The French troops were exercised in his presence ; and, masques and balls, operas, comedies, and sham sea-fights (?) were daily planned for his amusement. The king, on St. Louis's day, gave a public feast in his honour, besides bestowing on him several valuable presents, among which was a sword and belt set with pearls and diamonds, valued at forty thousand pistoles.

In 1672, Buckingham was again despatched to the French king at Utrecht, on matters connected with the Dutch war ; on which occasion, in passing through the Hague, he stopped to pay his respects to the Princess of Orange. During their interview he spoke warmly of the Dutch, and, in order to please her, dwelt on the affection which he affirmed England bore to the States. "We do not," said he, "use Holland like a mistress, we love her like a wife." "*Vraiment je crois que vous aimez comme vous aimez la vôtre,*" was the answer of the princess. "Verily, I believe you love us as you love your own."

In 1674 we find Buckingham again in disgrace with his sovereign. His unpopularity at court probably rendered him unpopular with the University of Cambridge, inasmuch as we find him, in the course of this year, compelled to resign the

chancellorship which they had conferred on him about three years previously.

On an important question, which was discussed in the House of Lords in 1677, whether a parliament that had been prorogued more than a year, were not, by an old law, virtually dissolved and its acts annulled, Buckingham, together with the Lords Shaftesbury, Salisbury, and Wharton, — in consequence of supporting so dangerous a position and arguing its merits too warmly, — was ordered to be committed to the Tower. While the lords were still debating on the question of their committal, Buckingham had ingeniously contrived to withdraw. The house was extremely angry, and it was proposed to address the king to issue a proclamation for his arrest; the next morning, however, he appeared in his usual place. He was no sooner perceived than there were loud cries, "To the bar." But he rose with his customary ease, and treated the whole matter as a jest. "He begged their lordships' pardon," he said, "for retiring the night before; they very well knew the exact economy he kept in his family, and perceiving their lordships intended he should be some time in another place, he only went home to set his house in order, and was now come to submit to their lordships' pleasure." The duke, of course, followed his friends to the Tower. After a few days, Buckingham, Salisbury, and Wharton were discharged on making the necessary submission.

Shaftesbury, however, desirous of being regarded as a popular martyr, continued to glory in his opposition, and consequently remained in confinement. As the gay duke, on being liberated from his disagreeable lodgings, was passing the windows of Shaftesbury's apartments, the stubborn earl looked out wistfully. "What," he said, "are you going to leave us?" "Why, yes," replied Buckingham, "such giddy-headed fellows as I am, can never stay long in one place." It was not till nearly a year afterward that Shaftesbury, after having vainly attempted to obtain redress by law, found it expedient to make the required submission, and, consequently obtained his release from the Tower.

Buckingham, at the death of his old master, Charles the Second, in 1685, retired to what remained of his once princely property in Yorkshire. Even as early as 1667 he had been looked upon as an impoverished man. At a later period, Marvell, in a letter written in 1671, and Musgrave, in his MS. notes to De Grammont, estimate his debts at 140,000*l.* sterling. It must, however, be placed to Buckingham's credit, that, notwithstanding his influence at court, he had refused to enrich himself out of the public purse. "If I am a grievance," he said, in his defence to the House of Commons, "I am, at least, the cheapest you have ever had. I have lost as much estate as most men have got, and that is a big word; I am

honest, and when I appear otherwise, I desire to die." Probably, in the last few years of his life, he became less reckless in his expenditure of money ; inasmuch as, after his death, the money produced from the sale of his estates was found sufficient for the liquidation of his debts.

After his retirement from the court, his time appears to have been passed in the usual amusements of the country, hospitality and fox-hunting. His addiction to the pursuits of a country life, the latest fancy of his versatile mind, excited the amusement and curiosity of his friends ; and, accordingly, in a letter dated Ratisbon, 21st October, 1686, we find his former wild companion, Sir George Etherege, bantering him with considerable humour on the change in his habits. "I have heard the news," he says, "with no less astonishment than if I had been told the Pope had begun to wear a periwig, and had turned beau in the seventy-fourth year of his age." "Is it possible," he proceeds, "that your Grace, who has seen ten times more luxury than the emperor¹ ever knew, conversed with finer women, kept politer company, possessed as much, too, of the true real greatness of the world as ever he enjoyed, should in an age still capable of pleasure, and under a fortune whose very ruins would make up a com-

¹ Charles the Fifth, to whom Etherege had commenced by comparing Buckingham, a parallel not very easy to sustain in most of its points.

fortable electorate here in Germany,—is it possible, I say, that your Grace should leave the play at the beginning of the fourth act, when all the spectators are in pain to know what will become of the hero, and what mighty matters he is reserved for, that set out so advantageously in the first! That a person of your exquisite taste, who has breathed the air of courts even from your infancy, should be content, in that part of your life which is most difficult to be pleased, and most easy to be disgusted, to take up with the conversation of country parsons, a sort of people whom to my knowledge your Grace never much admired, and do penance in the nauseous company of lawyers, whom I am certain you abominate!” “Who could ever have prophesied,” proceeds the gay writer, “that the Duke of Buckingham, who never vouchsafed his embraces to any ordinary beauty, would ever condescend to sigh and languish for the heiress apparent of a thatched cottage, in a straw hat, flannel petticoat, stockings of as gross a thrum as the blue-coat boys’ caps at the hospital, and a smock—the Lord defend me from the wicked idea of it—of as coarse a canvas as ever served an apprenticeship to a mackerel-boat!”

After the death of his predecessor, James the Second took considerable interest in Buckingham’s spiritual welfare, and, by means of Fathers Petre and Fitzgerald, endeavoured to convert him to Popery. There is extant an account of his con-

ference with the former divine, which affords an agreeable instance of Buckingham's wit. "Father Petre," says the relator of the anecdote, "undertook to convert the Duke of Buckingham to Popery, and, among other arguments with which he was prepared, set out with this, which these casuists commonly urge, and which, attacking the imagination in its weakest point, fear, draws in many silly people: 'We,' said the good Jesuit, 'deny that any one can possibly be saved out of our church; your Grace allows that our people may be saved.' 'No, curse ye,' said the duke, 'I make no doubt but you will all be damned to a man.' The reverend father started, and said, gravely, 'Sir, I cannot argue with a person so void of all charity.' 'I did not expect, reverend father,' said the duke, calmly, 'such a reproach from you, whose whole reasoning with me was founded on the very same instance of want of charity in yourself.'" The manner in which he foiled the argument of his other opponent, Father Fitzgerald, is described by the duke himself, in one of the most amusing productions of his versatile mind.

At this time Buckingham had not only passed the meridian of life, but the career of profligacy, to which he had long been addicted, had begun to make its stealthy but formidable inroads on his constitution. There are few passages more deservedly famous than Pope's description of the

last illness and obscure death of the once princely Buckingham :

“ In the worst inn’s worst room, with mat half hung,
The floor of plaster, and the walls of dung;
On once a flock-bed, but repaired with straw,
With tape-tied curtains never meant to draw;
The George and Garter dangled from that bed,
Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red;
Great Villiers lies — alas, how changed from him,
That life of pleasure, and that soul of whim !
Gallant and gay in Cliveden’s proud alcove,
The bower of wanton Shrewsbury and love;
Or just as gay at council, in a ring
Of mimic statesmen and their merry king.
No wit to flatter, left of all his store ;
No fool to laugh at, which he valued more ;
There, victor of his health, of fortune, friends,
And fame, this lord of useless thousands ends.”

The fine effect of these verses consists so much in the striking antithesis — in the moral and melancholy contrast, — in the circumstance of the once magnificent George Villiers breathing his last in a wretched inn, — that without further evidence we should have treated it rather as a brilliant poetical picture, than as strictly and historically true. But Pope, in the course of conversation with his friend Spence, gave the same account of the circumstances attending Buckingham’s end, illustrated, moreover, by a remarkable addition. “ He got the better,” he said, “ of his vast estate, and died between two common girls at

a little ale-house in Yorkshire." Echard, also, who lived some years nearer to the time of Buckingham, places the scene at a "public house," and Bishop Kennet, who may almost be looked upon as his contemporary, calls it a mean house. In a letter of the period we find: "The Duke of Bucks, who hath some time supported himself with artificial spirits, on Friday fell to a more manifest decay, and on Sunday yielded up the ghost at Helmsley, in Yorkshire,¹ in *a little ale-house*, where these eight months he had been without meat or money, deserted of all his servants almost." His death certainly took place at a house situated on his own property at Kirby Moorside, in the residence of one of his tenants; but whether that residence were a public house, or merely an obscure cottage, only the poetry of Pope can render of much importance. His illness, which lasted three days, commenced with an ague and fever. He had heated himself in fox-hunting, and having inconsiderately sat down on the wet grass, was seized by the malady that hurried him to the grave.

According to Echard he was visited in his last hours by his relation, Lord Irwin, who persuaded him to send for a clergyman. The minister made some preliminary inquiries of the duke as to the nature of his religious opinions. "It is an insig-

¹ "— Helmsley, once proud Buckingham's delight,
Yields to a scrivener and a city knight."

nificant question," said the dying man, "for I have been a shame and a disgrace to all religions; if you can do me any good, do."

But the account of his faithful adherent, Brian Fairfax, who really appears to have loved him for his own sake, can alone be implicitly relied upon. The night before the duke died, Fairfax received a message from him, desiring him to provide a bed for him, in his house at Bishophill in York. The next morning, however, the same messenger returned, with the news that his master was dying. Fairfax immediately set out for Kirby Moorside, but on his arrival Buckingham was already speechless. The duke knew him, however, and gave him an earnest look of recognition. There were present in the chamber, the Earl of Arran, son of the Duke of Hamilton,—who, hearing of his illness, had visited him on his way to Scotland,—and a gentleman of the neighbourhood, a justice of the peace. From the latter person Fairfax elicited a few particulars. Before the duke had become speechless, he was asked whether he wished to give any directions respecting the disposal of his estate, to which he returned no answer. It was then thought necessary to advertise him of his imminent danger. He was accordingly asked if the clergyman of the parish should be sent for, to which he also made no reply. One of the bystanders intimating that he might probably wish to communicate with a Roman Catholic priest,

“No, no,” he said, impatiently; adding that he would have nothing to do with them. The propriety of summoning a clergyman of the Established Church was then once more pressed upon him, on which he answered, calmly, “Yes, pray send for him.” This was on the morning of the day on which he died. The minister, on his arrival, performed the usual offices for the sick, to which the duke paid devout attention, and afterward received the sacrament.

The correctness of Fairfax’s narrative is borne out by Lord Arran himself, one of the principal actors in the melancholy scene, who thus writes to Doctor Spratt, Bishop of Rochester, formerly chaplain to Buckingham:

“KIRBY MOORSIDE, April 17, 1687.

“MY LORD:—Mere chance having thrown me into these parts, by accident, as I was at York, in my journey toward Scotland, I heard of the Duke of Buckingham’s illness here, which made me take a resolution of waiting upon his Grace, to see what condition he was in. I arrived here on Friday, in the afternoon, where I found him in a very low condition; he had been long ill of an ague, which had made him weak, but his understanding was as good as ever, and his noble parts were so entire, that though I saw death in his looks at first sight, he would by no means think of it. He told me he was on horseback but two

days before, and that he found himself so well at heart that he was sure he could be in no danger of his life. He told me he had a mighty descent fallen upon his abdomen, with an inflammation and a great swelling, but he thought by applying warm medicines the swelling would fall, and then he would be at ease; but it proved otherwise; for a mortification came on those low parts, and rapidly ascended, so that it soon occasioned his death. So soon as I had arrived, I sent to York for one Doctor Waler, for I found him here in a most miserable condition; he desired me to stay with him, which I very willingly obeyed. I confess that it made my heart bleed to see the Duke of Buckingham in so pitiful a place, and in so bad a condition; and what made it worse, he was not at all sensible of it, for he thought in a day or two he should be well; and when we minded him of his condition, he said it was not as we apprehended. The doctors told me his case was desperate, and, though he enjoyed the free exercise of his senses, that in a day or two at most it would kill him, but they durst not tell him of it; so they put a hard part upon me to pronounce death to him, which I saw approaching so fast that I thought it was high time for him to think of another world, for it was impossible for him to continue long in this. So I sent for a very worthy gentleman, Mr. Gibson, a neighbour of his Grace's, who lives but a mile from this place, to be an assistant to me in

this work ; so we jointly represented his condition to him, who, I saw, was at first very uneasy ; but I think we should not have discharged the duty of honest men, or I of a faithful kinsman, if we had suffered him to go out of this world without desiring him to prepare for death, and look into his conscience.

“ After having plainly told him his condition, I asked him whom I should send for to be assistant to him during the small time he had to live ; he would make me no answer, which made me conjecture ; and having formerly heard that he had been inclining to be a Roman Catholic, I asked him if I should send for a priest ; for I thought any act that could be like a Christian, was what his condition now wanted most ; but he positively told me he was not one of that persuasion, and so would not hear any more on that subject, for he was of the Church of England ; but hitherto he would not hear of a parson, though he had declared his aversion to my offering to send for a priest. But after some time, beginning to feel his distemper mount, he desired me to send for the parson of this parish, who said prayers for him, which he joined in very freely, but still he did not think he should die ; though this was yesterday at seven in the morning, and he died about eleven at night.

“ Mr. Gibson asked him if he had made a will, or if he would declare who was to be his heir ; but to the first he answered that he had made none,

and to the last, whoever was named, he always answered 'No.' First, my lady duchess was named, and then, I think, almost everybody that had any relation to him, but his answer was always 'No.' And to see if he would change any way the answer or manner of it, they asked him if my Lord Purbeck was to be sent for, but to that he answered, 'By no means.' I did fully represent my lady duchess's condition to him, and told him it was absolutely fit, during the time he had the exercise of his reason, to do something to settle his affairs; but nothing that was said to him could make him come to any point.

"I then said, that since he would do nothing in his worldly affairs, I desired he might die like a Christian, and since he called himself of the Church of England, the parson was ready here to administer the sacrament to him; which he said he would take; so accordingly I gave orders for it, and two other honest gentlemen received with him, Mr. Gibson and Colonel Liston, an old servant of his Grace's. At first he called out three or four times, for he thought the ceremony looked as if death was near, which for the strength of his noble parts (they not being yet affected) he could not easily believe; for all this time he was not willing to take death to him; but in a few moments after he became calm, and received the sacrament with all the decency imaginable, and in an hour

afterward he lost his speech, and continued so till eleven at night, when he died.

“The confusion he has left his affairs in will make his heir, whoever he be, very uneasy. To tell you truly, I believe there is no other will in being but what they say is in the trustees’ hands ; for all the servants say they knew there was a parchment sealed, which my lord said he would alter, which they looked upon to be his will ; whether he has cancelled it I cannot find ; some say one Mr. Burrell has it ; but nobody here can give any distinct account of it. But my lord himself said positively, in the presence of several, that he had no will in being ; so what to make of this I cannot tell you. We supposed that it might be Sir William Villiers that he intended for his heir ; but he said several times, before us all, ‘No ;’ so that I cannot imagine, if he has any will, to whom he has given it, I myself being as nearly related to him as any by full blood. Mr. Brian Fairfax and Mr. Gibson have been witnesses of my proceedings since my being here ; I hope they will give an account of it. I thought in honour I could not leave him in this condition, being so nearly related to him ; especially his Grace being in such a retired corner, where there was nobody but myself till I sent for this Mr. Gibson. My Lord Fairfax, of Gilling, came yesterday, in the afternoon ; but he was speechless when he came.

“I have ordered the corpse to be embalmed, and carried to Helmsley Castle, and there to remain till my lady duchess’s pleasure shall be known. There must be speedy care taken; for there is nothing here but confusion, not to be expressed. Though his stewards have received vast sums, there is not so much as one farthing, as they tell me, for defraying the least expense; but I have ordered his intestines to be buried at Helmsley, where his body is to remain till further orders.

“Being the nearest kinsman in the place, I have taken the liberty of giving his Majesty an account of his death, and have sent his George and blue ribbon, to be disposed of as his Majesty shall think fit; I have addressed it under cover to my lord president, to whom I beg you would carry the bearer the minute he arrives.

“I have given orders that nothing shall be embezzled, and for that reason, as soon as my lord died, I called to see his strong box, but not before Mr. Brian Fairfax and Mr. Gibson. I found nothing of moment in it, but some loose letters of no concern; but such as they are, I have ordered them to be locked up, and delivered to my lady duchess; so also the small plate and linen he had, I have committed it to the care of Lord Fairfax.

“So now that I have given your lordship this particular account of everything, I have nothing

more to do, but to assure your lordship, that I am,
my lord,

“Your lordship’s most assured

“Friend and humble servant,

“ARRAN.”

According to Lord Dover, in his notes to “The Ellis Correspondence,” the house in which Buckingham died, and which probably still exists, must formerly have been one of the best in the town of Kirby Moorside. We learn, from the same authority, that the only memorial of this once brilliant personage, which now remains in Kirby Moorside, is the following rude entry in an old register of burials :

“1687, April 17th, Gorges villus Lord dooke of
bookingham!”

Buckingham died on the 16th of April, 1688, in the sixty-first year of his age. His body, having been embalmed, was conveyed to Westminster, where it was interred in the vault of his family in Henry the Seventh’s Chapel. He left no children by his duchess, nor, apparently, by any of his numerous amours.

An affectionate attempt has been made by Fairfax to rescue the name of his master from entire reprobation. He dwells on his undoubted genius and varied accomplishments; he considers his intrigues with women to have been greatly exaggerated; and, finally, gives him the credit of

good-humour, charity, and a forgiving disposition. There is something redeeming and agreeable in the reprobate duke having left even one friend to regret his loss and respect his memory. But, after all, it is to be feared that the bitter censure of Warburton is scarcely too severe. "It was the fortune," he says, "of this wretched man to do as much mischief to the morals of Charles the Second's court, as his father had done to the politics of James the First's."

In taking leave of a character which has been so often drawn, we will conclude with one of the most finished passages from the pen of Walpole. "When this extraordinary man," he says, "with the figure and genius of Alcibiades, could equally charm the Presbyterian Fairfax and the dissolute Charles; when he alike ridiculed that witty king and his solemn chancellor; when he plotted the ruin of his country with a cabal of bad ministers, or, equally unprincipled, supported its cause with bad patriots, one laments that such parts should have been devoid of every virtue. But when Alcibiades turns chemist; when he is a real bubble and a visionary miser; when ambition is but a frolic; when the worst designs are for the fooliest ends, contempt extinguishes all reflections on his character." "His portrait," adds the same writer, "has been drawn by four masterly hands: Burnet has hewn it out with his rough chisel; Count Hamilton touched it with that

slight delicacy, that finishes while it seems but to sketch; Dryden catched the living likeness; Pope completed the historical resemblance." To these we may add the dark outline of Butler. His sketch of the libertine duke — prompted, however, it must be admitted to have been, by the bitterest feelings of personal dislike — is one of the most disagreeable portraits in the gallery of human character.

CHAPTER V.

JAMES, DUKE OF MONMOUTH.

Summary of Monmouth's Character—His Parentage and Education — His Brilliant Appearance at the Court of Charles II. — Monmouth Kills a Beadle in a Midnight Frolic — His Marriage with the Heiress of Buccleugh — Character of the Duchess — Monmouth's Military Services — His Popularity — General Belief in His Legitimacy — Charles Denies Having Been Married to Monmouth's Mother — Monmouth Banished to Holland.

THIS spoiled child of fortune was as remarkable for the smiles which were lavished on him in his lifetime, as for the tears which were showered on his grave. There was a grace in his manners, and a charm in his countenance, which produced an imperceptible effect on all hearts. He was far from being deficient in many amiable qualities. He appears to have been a staunch friend, an enemy to oppression, and a firm adherer to his word. His courage almost amounted to rashness. Gay and gallant with one sex, and easy and affable with the other ; joyous, unaffected, and obliging ; no wonder that he was the darling of a libertine court, nor that his rank, grace, and surpassing beauty rendered him its chiefest ornament.

But Monmouth was not without faults. Weak-minded and vain of his accomplishments, inflated by the applause of the vulgar, and mistaking their empty clamours for substantial fame, he imagined himself the leader of a party, while in fact he was but their tool. Overmatched and mystified by the subtle Shaftesbury, Monmouth, the visionary subverter of a government, was in fact but the foil of that unprincipled statesman. Formed by nature to figure in the silken pageants of the Paphian court of Charles, his genius was unequal to his ambition, and in the end he found himself in a vortex of difficulties from which he had neither the talent nor the firmness of purpose to extricate himself. Impetuous and high-spirited, he appears throughout to have been fanciful in his projects, rash in his undertakings, and irresolute in his conduct.

James, Duke of Monmouth, was the eldest son of Charles the Second, by Lucy Walters, a beautiful woman of dissolute morals. He was born at Rotterdam on the 9th of April, 1649. His guardian was Lord Crofts, whose surname he bore till the Restoration. His childhood was passed under the eye of the queen-mother, Henrietta Maria, at Paris. King James tells us that his nephew was bred up a Catholic under the tuition of Father Gough, English Oratorian; and Algernon Sydney, who had made love to Monmouth's mother previous to her intimacy with

the Whig party was not without some difficulties and want of due organization, but the influence of the Queen and the Duke of York, who was the predominant figure in it, gave it the character of a party, while it had no name. Organized and supported by George Monck, the Whig party was instrumental, with the Duke of York, in the fall of the Stuart dynasty. It was of course to Queen Anne the chief supporters of the Whig party, but George was instrumental in his influence over the Queen, and he himself, in a very important way, influenced her to do nothing to help the Stuart party. The Whig party, however, was not organized until the Queen's death.

James, Duke of Monmouth.

Photo-etching after the engraving by Picart, 1724.

James Duke of Monmouth, was the second son of King Charles II. He was born at Whitehall on the 14th of April, 1649. His grandmother was Queen Henrietta Maria, whose influence he bore to the Restoration. His childhood was passed under the eye of the Queen mother, Henrietta Maria, at Paris. King James told us that his nephews were fired up to a Council under the names of Father George, English George, and Augustus George, and his nephews in this way a strong alliance to his country with



Charles, gives the same account. "By the direction," he says, "of Lord Crofts, he was brought up under the discipline of the Pères de l'Oratoire." "I was placed," says the Duke of Berwick, in his Memoirs, "by Father Gough, priest of the Oratoire, at Jully, a college of his society, where the Duke of Monmouth, natural son of Charles the Second, had also studied." The good fathers apparently paid but little attention to his education; indeed, in after life Monmouth bitterly lamented how much he had suffered by their neglect.

When Queen Henrietta returned to England, in January, 1662, she carried thither "young Crofts" in her train, and introduced him to the voluptuous court of her son. He was presented to Charles at Hampton Court, who, struck with his singular grace and beauty, was unable to conceal his pride and gratification. "The Duchess of Cleveland," says De Grammont, "was quite out of humour with the king; the children she had by his Majesty were like so many little puppets, compared with this new Adonis." Though only in his fourteenth year, his appearance at court was as brilliant as if he had been a prince of the blood. The same year he was created Duke of Orkney, and, on the 25th of February following, Duke of Monmouth. Apartments were prepared for him in the privy gallery at Whitehall; he was allowed a retinue and equipages

befitting an heir apparent ; he took his seat in the House of Peers, and in April, 1663, was installed a Knight of the Garter.

His appearance at this period is thus described by the fastidious De Grammont. “ His figure and the external graces of his person were such, that nature, perhaps, never formed anything more complete. His face was extremely handsome, and yet it was a manly face, neither inanimate nor effeminate, each feature having its peculiar beauty and delicacy. He had a wonderful genius for every sort of exercise, an engaging aspect, and an air of grandeur. The astonishing beauty of his outward form excited universal admiration ; those, who before were looked upon as handsome, were now entirely forgotten at court, and all the gay and beautiful of the fair sex were at his devotion. He was particularly beloved by the king, but the universal terror of husbands and lovers. This, however, did not long continue ; for nature not having endowed him with qualifications to secure the possession of the heart, the fair sex soon perceived the defect.” “ He was very handsome,” says Madame Dunois, “ extremely well made, and had an air of greatness answerable to his birth. He was brave, even to a fault, and exposed himself in the service abroad with a courage not to be excelled. He danced extremely well, and with an air that charmed all that saw him. His heart was always divided between love

and glory. He was rich, young, gallant, and, as I have before said, the handsomest and best shaped of men. It will not after this appear strange that many ladies made it their business to engage his heart." According to Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, "he was always engaged in some amour." Dryden's beautiful description of him in his "*Absalom and Achitophel*," shall complete the picture :

"Of all the numerous progeny were none
So beautiful, so brave as Absalom.
Early in foreign fields he won renown,
With kings and states allied to Israel's crown.
In peace the thoughts of war he could remove,
And seem'd as he were only born for love.
Whate'er he did was done with so much ease,
In him alone 'twas natural to please.
His motions all accompanied with grace,
And Paradise was opened in his face.
With secret joy indulgent David viewed
His youthful image in himself renewed.
To all his wishes nothing he denied,
And made the charming Annabel his bride.
What faults he had — for who from faults is free?
His father could not, or he would not see !
Some warm excesses, which the law forebore,
Were construed youth that purged by boiling o'er;
And Amnon's murder, by a specious name,
Was called a just revenge for injured fame."

The allusion to "Amnon's murder" in the last couplet, is far from clear. Sir Walter Scott, in

his notes on Dryden, supposes it to allude to the slitting of Sir John Coventry's nose, by Monmouth's agency, in consequence of a disrespectful allusion in the House of Commons to the king's amours. With this explanation it is difficult to be satisfied, however much we may be at a loss for another. Monmouth, who was foremost in all the wild frolics and debaucheries of the period, certainly appears, in 1671, to have caused the death of a fellow creature. Andrew Marvell writes, on the 28th of February in that year : "On Saturday night last, or rather Monday morning at two o'clock, some persons reported to be of great quality, together with other gentlemen, set upon the watch and killed a poor beadle, praying for his life upon his knees, with many wounds ; warrants are out for apprehending some of them, but they are fled." Again he writes a short time afterward : "Doubtless you have heard, before this time, how Monmouth, Albemarle, Dunbane, and seven or eight gentlemen, fought with the watch and killed a poor beadle ; they have all got their pardon for Monmouth's sake, but it is an act of great scandal." This explanation, however, is quite as much open to exception. Dryden would scarcely have dignified a beadle as Amnon ; and, instead of being in "revenge for injured fame," the affair appears to have originated in a street squabble. In the State Poems are some verses "on the three dukes

killing the beadle on Sunday morning, February 26, 1670-1."

On the 20th April, 1663, his father married him to Lady Anne Scott, sole daughter of Francis, Earl of Buccleugh, the wealthiest heiress in the three kingdoms. Monmouth was only fourteen at the time, the bride a year younger. The lady possessed some estimable qualities besides her wealth, but they were unable to attach the heart of her fickle husband. She was certainly gifted with taste and was a friend to genius. Dryden does honour to her as the "patroness of his poor unworthy poetry,"¹ and Gay, the poet, was for some time her secretary. Madame Dunois says: "She had all that was to be wished for to make her agreeable. She had virtue, wit, riches, and birth, and though she was not extraordinarily beautiful, and was a little lame, yet in the main she was very desirable." "His duchess," says Evelyn, "was a virtuous and excellent lady, who brought him great riches, and a second dukedom

¹ Sir Walter Scott assures us that it was "her patronage which first established Dryden's popularity," a circumstance too honourable to her memory to be here suppressed. This is high praise, and, if true, does great taste to the duchess's taste and judgment. But it is a pity Sir Walter does not state his authority. His natural partiality for the house of Buccleugh may have converted a pleasing impression into positive fact. It is strange that Dryden, in his dedication to the duchess of the "Indian Emperor," does not allude to the circumstance. He seldom misses an opportunity for panegyric.

in Scotland." Fresh honours were heaped on him. In a few years he became master of the horse, a general in the army, gentleman of the bed-chamber, captain of the life-guards,¹ Governor of Hull, Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, and, in right of his young duchess, Lord Great Chamberlain of Scotland.

When only sixteen years of age, Monmouth bore a part in the great sea-fight, in 1665, on which occasion the Dutch Admiral Opdam was blown up in his flag-ship. He early acquired a knowledge of military tactics, and in 1672 was appointed to an important command. Charles, by agreement with Louis the Fourteenth, had engaged to supply that monarch with six thousand men, for service by land against the Dutch. Young as he was, these troops were placed under the command of Monmouth, who arrived with them at the French camp at Charleroi, in time for the commencement of the campaign. While on this service he was present at the taking of Orfoy, Rhineberg, Wesel, Emmerick, Doesburg, and Zutphen. He returned to England in July, and was received in London with joy and acclamations. The populace loved Monmouth even more than they disliked the war.

¹ The king appointed him to the first troop of life-guards on the 29th September, 1668, in Hyde Park. He presented him at the same time with a saddle, which is still preserved in the family of Buccleugh. His late Majesty, William IV., expressed a wish to see this interesting relic, and it was accordingly sent from Dalkeith to London for his inspection.

In 1676 he led the storming party at the siege of Maestricht, where he displayed great gallantry and discretion. His uncle, King James, mentions particularly the retaking of a half-moon, in which Monmouth valiantly distinguished himself. In 1678 he was employed with the Dutch against the French. At the attack on the Duke of Luxembourg's line before Mons, his conduct and courage won the entire satisfaction of the Prince of Orange, perhaps the best judge in Europe of military science.

His last professional service, with the exception of his fatal engagement at Sedgemoor, was in 1679, when he was sent with full powers to quell the insurrection in Scotland. He performed the service with equal courage and humanity. On the 22d of June, the Covenanters were entirely defeated at Bothwell Bridge, about eight hundred having been killed, and nearly twelve hundred taken prisoners. Monmouth distinguished himself by his endeavours to prevent the massacre of the poor wretches. A few, who were proved to have had a share in the murder of Archbishop Sharpe, were hung, and only those who refused to submit to the government were sent out of the country.

About this period, the unpopularity of James, Duke of York, and the general outcry for a bill to exclude him from the succession to the throne on account of his being a Roman Catholic, opened a wide field for Monmouth's ambition. The

people loved him for his generosity, his valour, and a thousand other brilliant and endearing qualities. His zeal, moreover, during the frenzy of the Popish Plot, and his friendship with the popular idols of the day, had led to his being regarded as the champion of Protestantism and of freedom. There was no single point in which the gloomy and detested James could bear the least comparison with his graceful rival; but what added the greatest weight to Monmouth's ambitious projects, was a general belief in his legitimacy. This report, which originated in a project of Shaftesbury's, was no less industriously circulated than greedily devoured; it being confidently asserted that the king had been married to the duke's mother, Lucy Walters, in the first days of his passion for that beautiful courtesan.

That much importance was attached at the time to this improbable tale, is evident from the length at which James, the person most interested, dwells upon the disagreeable subject in his memoirs. According to this account, Shaftesbury and his colleagues endeavoured to tamper with Doctor Cosin, Bishop of Durham, who had been acquainted with the beautiful courtesan at Paris, and who had made some attempts to convert her from her mode of living. The agent employed was one Ross, formerly a governor of Monmouth's, who endeavoured to prevail upon the bishop to sign a certificate of her marriage with Charles.

To induce the bishop to be guilty of this gross act of fraud, the advantages which would accrue to the Protestant interests by excluding the Duke of York from the throne were principally and forcibly insisted upon by Ross. The bishop, however, very properly communicated the conspiracy to the king. Charles took considerable trouble in investigating the affair, and the only person who was said to have actually seen the contract, was summoned before the Council. The man, however, on his examination, positively disavowed knowing anything of the matter. When Charles was at this period pressed by the Earls of Carlisle and Shaftesbury to declare Monmouth legitimate. "Much," he said, "as I love him, I had rather see him hanged at Tyburn than I would confess him to be my heir." It was fortunate for James that the king preferred justice even to his darling first-born. Had he yielded to the machinations of Shaftesbury, Monmouth would, not improbably, have succeeded to the throne, and his heirs might have sat on it at the present day.

About the time that these reports were in their busiest circulation, and when Monmouth was at the height of his popularity, Charles was seized with an alarming illness at Windsor. The friends of the rival dukes were of course on the alert, and had the king died at that juncture, there would, no doubt, have been a struggle for the succession. But Charles, in his danger, was not forgetful of

his brother's interests, and, with his permission, James was secretly sent for from Brussels, in order to be ready for any emergency. He arrived at Windsor with the utmost despatch, but fortunately the king, in the meantime, had been pronounced out of danger. To prevent the suspicion which the Duke of York's sudden reappearance in England might otherwise have excited in the minds of Monmouth's friends, it was endeavoured to give the visit the appearance of accident, and Charles cleverly acted surprise when his brother entered the apartment. The truth, however, was seen through by the opposite party, to whom this discovery of the duke's secret influence over his brother was not a little disconcerting.

But this was not the only blow to Monmouth's ambition at this period. Charles, in order to satisfy his brother, went so far as publicly and solemnly to deny his marriage with Lucy Walters. The following remarkable declaration will be found in the Council Book of the 3d of March, 1679 :

“ That to avoid any dispute which may happen in time to come concerning the succession to the crown, he declares in the presence of Almighty God, that he never gave nor made any contract of marriage, nor was married to any woman whatsoever, but to his present wife Queen Catherine, now living.

“ CHARLES REX.

“ *Whitehall, March 3d, 1679.*”

Again, three months afterward, we find Charles recording a protest in the Court of Chancery, that, "On the word of a king, and the faith of a Christian, he was never married to Mrs. Barlow, alias Walters, the Duke of Monmouth's mother, nor to any woman whatsoever, besides the now queen."

In addition to these triumphs, for such they were to James, his influence appeared to be gradually becoming all-powerful at court, while Monmouth's perceptibly declined. There can be little doubt, we think, that Charles had adopted the clever policy of balancing the power of the one against the other, and of throwing in his own influence, whenever either grew more powerful than suited his views.¹ At this juncture, in consequence of Monmouth's extraordinary popularity and evidently ambitious projects, it was no doubt the policy of Charles to throw his weight into his brother's scale; and accordingly Monmouth, having been deprived of his post of captain-general, and of the governorship of Hull, was ordered to withdraw himself into Holland. The spoiled child of splendour was extremely unwilling to submit. It was

¹ Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, in his memoirs, throws some light on the misunderstanding between James and the Duke of Monmouth. The passage is curious as casting some slight doubt over the purity of the Duchess of Monmouth's conduct, the only instance, however, in which we have found it impugned. It certainly requires corroboration.

pointed out to him, however, by his friends, that, as his banishment would of course be attributed by the multitude to the machinations of James, the result would be a renewed accession of popular affection and applause; and, moreover, being assured by them that, as soon as Parliament should meet, there would be a vote of address to the king to demand his recall, Monmouth at length took his unwilling departure for Holland.

CHAPTER VI.

JAMES, DUKE OF MONMOUTH.

Monmouth Returns to England without Leave — Joy of the Populace on His Entering London — His Magnificent Progress through the Disturbed Districts — He Mingles in the Sports of the Peasantry — Is Arrested in the Town of Stafford by Order of the King — Wins the Prize at a Horse-race near St. Germain-en-Lai — His Share in the Rye-house Plot — Conceals Himself — Is Reconciled to the King — Joy of Charles on Monmouth's Return to Court — Again Banished — Resides at the Hague, and is Hospitably Entertained by the Prince and Princess of Orange — Extracts from Monmouth's Diary — Death of Charles II. — James II. Procures Monmouth's Dismissal from the Hague — He Retires to Brussels with His Mistress — Persuaded, Though Unwillingly, to Invade England — Sails from the Texel — Lands at Lyme — Takes the Title of King.

THE following year, 1680, Monmouth, having in vain solicited his recall, determined on returning to England without permission, and in the face of every danger. Such was his exceeding popularity, that although it was midnight when he entered London, the watch took it upon themselves to arouse the sleeping inhabitants, by announcing to them the return of their idol. Within an hour or two the church bells were ringing their joyous

peals, and bonfires blazed in the streets. Charles instantly sent a peremptory message to his disobedient son to return to Holland. Instead, however, of obeying, he set out on a magnificent progress through the disturbed counties of Lancashire, Staffordshire, Worcestershire, and Cheshire; his retinue consisting of a hundred persons armed and splendidly accoutred. In a scarce memoir of the duke, published in his lifetime, there is an account of his journey to the west at this period. "At Exeter," says the writer, "he was met by the citizens and the people of all the adjacent parts, to the number of twenty thousand persons; but that which was most remarkable was the appearance of a brave company of brisk, stout young men, all clothed in linen raiments and drawers, white, and harmless, having not so much as a stick in their hands. They were in number about nine hundred or a thousand. They went three miles out of the city to meet his Grace, where they were drawn up all on a little hill and divided into two parts, in which order they attended the duke's coming, who rid up first between them, and then round each company. After which they united, and went hand in hand in order before, where he no sooner arrived, but a universal shout from all parts echoed forth his welcome."

During his progress through the midland counties he was received at different places by the Lords Macclesfield, Brandon, Rivers, Colchester,

Delamere, Russell, and Grey, Sir Gilbert Gerard, and other principal landholders, at the head of their tenantry. Those who flocked to him were on many occasions armed, according to a feudal custom not then extinct. But a passage in Dalrymple's *Memoirs* will convey the best picture of this remarkable progress, as also of the nation's extraordinary fondness for the misguided duke. "When he approached a town," says the writer, "he quitted his coach and rode into it on horseback. The nobility and gentry went foremost in a band. At a distance, and single, rode the duke, and at a distance behind him the servants and tenants. When he entered the towns, those who received him formed themselves into three ranks; the nobility, gentry, and burghers being placed in the first, the tenants in the next, and the servants in the last. He gave orders for two hundred covers to be prepared wherever he dined. At dinner two doors were thrown open, that the populace might enter at the one, walk round the table to see their favourite, and give place to those that followed, by going out at the other. At other times he dined in an open tent in the fields, that he might the more see and be seen. At Liverpool he ventured to touch for the king's evil. He entered into all country diversions, and, as he was of wonderful agility, even ran races himself upon foot. And when he had outstripped the swiftest of the racers, he ran again in his

boots, and beat them though running in their shoes. The prizes which he gained during the day, he gave away at christenings in the evening. The bells were rung, bonfires made, and volleys of firearms discharged ; wherever he came, the populace, waving their hats in the air, shouted after him, ‘A Monmouth, a Monmouth !’ and all promised him their votes in future elections to Parliament.”

In the midst of this triumphant popularity, Monmouth, on the very day on which he was to have been entertained by the inhabitants of Stafford in one of their principal streets, was arrested by order of the king. A single sergeant-at-arms entered the town, and, having been admitted to Monmouth’s presence, produced his writ. Neither the duke nor his friends offered the slightest resistance. Monmouth instantly despatched Sir Thomas Armstrong for a *habeas corpus*, which having been granted, he returned to the metropolis. Dryden, in his “Absalom and Achitophel,” has celebrated the regal progresses of Monmouth.

“ The crowd, that still believe their kings oppress,
With lifted hands their young Messiah bless :
Who now begins his progress to ordain,
With chariots, horsemen, and a numerous train ;
From east to west his glories he displays,
And, like the sun, the promised land surveys.
Fame runs before him as the morning-star,
And shouts of joy salute him from afar ;
Each house receives him as a guardian god,
And consecrates the place of his abode.”

During the two years which followed, we know but little of Monmouth's proceedings. His conduct, however, continued so far from satisfactory that in 1682 the king expressed his pleasure to the University of Cambridge that they should choose another Chancellor in his room ; and, accordingly, his former wild companion, Christopher, Duke of Albemarle, was selected to succeed him. The university further volunteered the unworthy insult of removing Monmouth's picture from the public schools, and committing it to a bonfire. Bishop Kennet styles it an "eager and ridiculous" act, and it was not overlooked by the lampooners. Stepney wrote :

"Yes, fickle Cambridge, Perkins found this true,
Both from your rabble and your doctors too ;
With what applause you once received his grace,
And begged a copy of his god-like face !
But when the sage Vice-Chancellor was sure
The original in limbo lay secure ;
As greasy as himself, he sends a lictor,
To vent his loyal malice on the picture."

In 1683 we find Monmouth distinguishing himself on a different field. On the 25th of February, in that year, was contested, in the neighbourhood of the French capital, perhaps the most famous horse-race of modern times, Louis the Fourteenth having sent to different countries, inviting the owners of the swiftest horses to try their fortune upon that day. The plate, which the king himself

presented, and which was valued at a thousand pistoles, was run for on the plain d'Echère, near St. Germain-en-Lai. The honour of England was sustained by the Duke of Monmouth, who carried away the prize in the presence of Louis and the French court.

The celebrated Rye-house plot, for which Russell and Algernon Sydney lost their heads, followed shortly after this event. Monmouth's share in the conspiracy was at least equal to that of his unfortunate friends; indeed, as he seems to have had an eye to the crown, his guilt was undoubtedly more flagrant. The duke, however, more fortunate than his colleagues, contrived to effect his escape.

Burnet relates a strange story connected with Monmouth's flight. As soon as the council, which had declared Sydney to be a traitor, had broken up, Charles, he says, hastened to the Duchess of Monmouth, and wept while he discoursed with her of her misguided husband. Her house, he told her, would shortly be searched, but, as he had given orders that her private apartments should be held sacred, he suggested that she might easily conceal the duke in them, if she wished. Monmouth, adds the bishop, "distrusted the king's word, and concealed himself elsewhere, a fortunate circumstance, as it happened, since the duchess's apartments were the first that were searched."

The bishop tells us that this story was related to him by Lord Cutts, who had it from Monmouth

himself. Lord Dartmouth, however, throws considerable doubt on Burnet's accuracy on this occasion. "Mr. Francis Gwin," he says, "secretary at war in Queen Anne's time, told me that as soon as this book was published, he asked the Duchess of Monmouth if she remembered anything of this story; she answered it was impossible she should, for there was not one word of it true." Indeed, so desirous was Charles of being reconciled to Monmouth, and such was his affection for his rebellious son, that during the whole time that the duke was supposed to be concealed, and while a proclamation was actually out for his arrest, he not only sent him the kindest messages, but even admitted him on several occasions to secret interviews. "The night," says Welwood, "that the duke first appeared at court upon his reconciliation, King Charles was so little master of himself that he could not dissemble a mighty joy in his countenance, and in everything he did or said, insomuch that it was the public talk about town, and strongly insinuated to the Duke of York that all the king's former proceedings against the Duke of Monmouth were but grimace."

The reconciliation appears to have been principally effected by a penitent letter which Monmouth addressed to the king. "There is nothing," he wrote, "under Heaven has struck me so much to the heart, as to be put into a proclamation for an intention of murdering you, sir, and the duke. I

do call God Almighty to witness, and I wish I may die this moment I am writing, if ever it entered into my head, or ever I said the least thing to anybody that could make them think I could wish such a thing ; I am sure there cannot be such villains upon earth to say I ever did." Charles was sensibly affected at the perusal of this letter, which Monmouth took care to follow up with another even more tender and submissive. In his second appeal he describes himself as the "most miserable disconsolate creature now living." But his pride must have suffered a severe struggle, when his fortunes compelled him to humble himself to the Duke of York. "Neither," he writes, "do I imagine to receive your pardon otherwise than by the intercession of the duke, whom I acknowledge to have offended, and am prepared to submit myself in the humblest manner." It was one of the conditions on which he was received into favour, that he should ostensibly owe his pardon to the intercession of James ; Monmouth, on his part, stipulating that on no account should he be brought forward as a witness against his friends. These arrangements having been privately made, Charles summoned an extraordinary council, at which he expressed a firm conviction of his son's penitence and remorse. Accordingly Monmouth was once more received into favour, and permitted to attend the court.

But this happy state of affairs was of short

duration. Monmouth not only suffered his old friends — men hostile to the court and to the tranquillity of the nation — to flock to his presence, but the fact of his having admitted his errors was even confidently denied by his partisans. The line of conduct adopted by Charles toward his rebellious son was, nevertheless, conciliating almost to weakness. He spoke affectionately to him of the prevailing reports ; dwelt on the anxiety which he felt lest Monmouth should relapse into his former errors ; and concluded by imploring him to make the same admission to the public which he had already made to him in private. Charles himself drew up the draft of a letter, which Monmouth, apparently much affected by the king's unexpected kindness, unhesitatingly signed. Indeed, if his contrition were really sincere, there was nothing in the document which he need have blushed to subscribe. While it admitted Monmouth's well-known share in the late conspiracy, it denied all intention of assassinating his Majesty ; concluding with a hope that his offences would be pardoned, and with a promise never again to be guilty of similar indiscretions.

But for the notorious unsteadiness of his mind, the submission of Monmouth would have been a severe blow to his party. He was instantly assailed by them with all kinds of specious and pernicious arguments. Monmouth listened and was undone. Hastening to the king, he vehe-

mently requested that the paper might be returned to him. Charles very dispassionately told him he should never have occasion to say he was forced into what he had done, and that he would not therefore retain the document against his will. He warned him, however, to consider seriously on the step which he was about to take; allowing him till the following morning for further deliberation. The next day, the same on which Sydney was beheaded, the request was renewed by Monmouth with even increased earnestness. Charles sorrowfully put the letter into his hands, at the same time banishing him from his presence and the court.

During the two next years, which preceded the death of Charles, Monmouth resided principally in Holland, in which country he was treated with hospitality and respect. The Prince and Princess of Orange not only admitted him to the closest intimacy, but encouraged every kind of amusement, in order to render their court agreeable to their animated guest. The prince even persuaded his consort to learn to skate, for the purpose of gratifying a whim of the duke.

The king, during this period, not only frequently wrote to his misguided son, but supplied him privately with money. It was observed, also, that when any person dwelt upon Monmouth's past conduct with undue severity, Charles never failed to introduce some extenuating circumstance in his

favour. He still loved his erring son beyond all other human beings, and in his heart probably cherished the same charitable view of his conduct which Dryden has adopted in his beautiful apologetical verses on Monmouth :

“ Unblamed of life, ambition set aside,
Not stained with cruelty, not puffed with pride ;
How happy had he been, if destiny
Had higher placed his birth, or not so high !
His kingly virtues might have claimed a throne,
And blest all other countries but his own :
But charming greatness since so few refuse,
'Tis juster to lament him than accuse.”

The heart of Charles, as his life drew toward its close, yearned still more tenderly for the society of his beloved son. In Monmouth's private diary, which was found on his person after the battle of Sedgmoor, we discover evidence that, had not the king's days been prematurely shortened, he would have recalled Monmouth from Holland, and replaced him in his affections. Welwood, who had an opportunity of perusing this interesting document, informs us that it contained passages of so delicate a nature that King James ought in common justice to have committed it to the flames. Welwood obtained permission to copy it, and so far availed himself of the favour as to transcribe the following curious extracts. The names are throughout in cipher. Of these 29 is evidently

Charles, and 39 the Duke of York. Mr. Fox conceives that the mediator, L, was Lord Halifax, and, as that nobleman was similarly employed in a former misunderstanding between the king and Monmouth, his conjecture is probably the true one.

“ 13 October [1684]. — L came to me at eleven at night from 29. Told me 29 would never be brought to believe that I knew anything of that part of the plot that concerned Rye-house; but as things went he must behave himself as if he did believe it, for some reasons that might be to my advantage. L desired me to write to 29, which I refused; but afterward told me 29 expected it: and I promised to write to-morrow if he could call for the letter at S. L showed a great concern for me, and I believe him sincere, though 3 is of another mind.”

“ October 14. — L came as he promised, and receiving the letter from 3 sealed, refusing to read it himself, though I had left it open with S for that purpose.”

“ October 20. — L came to me at S, with a line or two from 29, very kind, assuring me he believed every word in my letter to be true; and advised me to keep hid till he had an opportunity to express his belief of it some other way. L told me he was to go out of town next day, and that 29 would send 80 to me in a day or two, whom he assured me I might trust.”

“October 25.—L came for me to —, where 29 was with 80. He received me pretty well, and said 30 and 50 were the causes of my misfortunes, and would ruin me. After some hot words against them, and against S, went away in a good humour.”

“October 26.—I went to E—, and was in danger of being discovered by some of Ogelthorpe’s men, that were accidentally at the back door of the garden.”

“November 2.—A letter from 29 to be to-morrow at seven at night at S, and nobody to know it but 80.”

“November 3.—He came not, there being an extraordinary council. But 80 brought me a copy of 50’s intercepted letter, which made rather for me than against me. Bid me come to-morrow at the same hour, and to say nothing of the letter, except 29 spoke of it first.”

“November 4.—I came and found 29 and L there. He was very kind, and gave me directions how to manage my business, and what words I should say to 39. He appointed 80 to come to me every night till my business was ripe, and promised to send with him directions from time to time.”

“November 9.—L came from 29 and told me my business should be done to my mind next week; and that Q¹ was my friend, and had spoke

¹ Evidently Queen Catherine.

to 39 and D¹ in my behalf ; which he said 29 took kindly, and had expressed so to her. At parting he told me there should be nothing required of me but what was both safe and honourable. But said there must be something done to blind 39."

"November 15. — L. came to me with a copy of the letter I was to sign to please 39. I desired to know in whose hands it was to be deposited, for I would have it in no hands but 29. He told me it should be so, but if 39 asked a copy it could not well be refused. I referred myself entirely to 29's pleasure."

"November 24. — L. came from 29, and ordered me to render myself to-morrow. Cautioned me to play my part, to avoid questions as much as possible, and to seem absolutely converted to 39's interest. Bade me bear with some words that might seem harsh."

"November 25. — I rendered myself. At night, 29 could not dissemble his satisfaction ; pressed my hand, which I remember not he did before, except when I returned from the French service. 29 acted his part well, and I too. 39 and D seemed not ill-pleased."

"November 26. — 29 took me aside, and falling on the business of L. R. [Lord Russell], said he inclined to have saved him, but was forced to it, otherwise he must have broke with 39. Bid me think no more on it. Coming home L told

¹ This appears to be the Duchess of York, Mary D'Este.

me he feared 39 began to smell out 29's carriage. That — said to 39 that morning, that all that was done was but sham."

"November 27.—Several told me of the storm that was brewing. Rumsey was with 39, and was seen to come out crying, that he must accuse a man he loved."

"December 29.—A letter from 29, bidding me stay till I heard further from him."

"January 5.—I received a letter from L, marked by 29 in the margin, to trust entirely in 10; and that in February I should certainly have leave to return. That matters were concerting toward it, and that 39 had no suspicion, notwithstanding, of my reception here."

"February 3.—A letter from L that my business was almost as well as done: but it must be so sudden as not to leave time for 39's party to counterplot. That it is probable he would chuse Scotland rather than Flanders or this country; ¹ which was all one to 29."

"February 16.—The sad news of his death by L, O cruel fate!"

The king had died on the 6th of February previous, thus eliciting from Monmouth this melancholy expression. It is remarkable that on his death-bed Charles apparently made no allusion to his favourite son.

¹ Holland.

James, on his accession to the throne, had sufficient influence with his son-in-law, the Prince of Orange, to procure Monmouth's expulsion from Holland, and accordingly he withdrew with his paramour, Lady Henrietta Wentworth, to Brussels, where, in order to supply the deficiencies of his education, he applied himself closely to study.

It was not without great difficulty that Monmouth was persuaded by his friends to undertake that rash invasion of England, which terminated by his losing his life on the scaffold. When the project had been first proposed to him, no one could have expressed himself more sensibly on the rashness and desperation of the undertaking. Surrounded, however, by the wildest Protestant zealots, his weak and vacillating mind afforded but little proof against their specious and animating arguments. Before long, he had even adopted the tone of fanatical enthusiasm which pervaded his followers, and, notwithstanding he was living in open adultery with a young and beautiful woman, appears to have imagined himself predestined by Heaven to be the champion of Protestantism in the approaching religious crusade. When his more reasonable friends expostulated with him on the insanity of his conduct, "How can I," he said, "avoid exposing my own person, when others are so forward in exposing theirs in my cause?"

That it was not, however, without due reflection and considerable hesitation that Monmouth entered

the lists with James, is evident from one of his own letters written at this period. "Pray, do not think," he says, "that it is an effect of melancholy, for that was never my greatest fault, when I tell you that in these three weeks' retirement in this place I have not only looked back but forward, and the more I consider our present circumstances, I think them still the more desperate, unless some unforeseen accident fall out which I cannot divine nor hope for." And he concludes: "For God's sake, think in the meantime of the improbabilities that lie naturally in our way, and let us not by struggling with our chains make them straiter and heavier. For my part, I'll run the hazard of being thought anything rather than a rash, inconsiderate man. And to tell you my thoughts without disguise, I am now so much in love with a retired life that I am never like to be fond of making a bustle in the world again."

But, as usual, his evil genius prevailed, and, on the 24th of May, 1685, he sailed from the Texel on his unfortunate expedition. His force was as weak as the undertaking was rash. The expedition consisted only of a frigate of thirty-two guns, three smaller vessels, and a small band consisting of eighty-two devoted but indiscreet followers. He had provided himself, however, with arms for five thousand men. After having been tossed about at sea, encountering stormy weather and contrary winds, for no fewer than nineteen days, he landed

at Lyme in Dorsetshire on the 11th of June. His first step was to assemble his few followers around him, when, having commanded silence, he fell on his knees on the beach, and prayed to Heaven to prosper his enterprise. He then drew his sword, and, followed by his men, led the way toward the town. He was received with extraordinary enthusiasm by the inhabitants. As he fixed his blue standard in the market-place, loud cheers for the Protestant religion, and shouts of “A Monmouth, a Monmouth,” rent the air.

Monmouth had trusted that the popularity of his name would speedily fill his ranks; nor was he greatly deceived in his expectations. The common people flocked affectionately around their idol, and accordingly in four days he found himself at the head of two thousand followers. One of his first steps was to issue a printed declaration, addressed entirely to the passions of the bigoted and the vulgar. In this inflammatory appeal, he spoke of James as his “mortal and bloody enemy,” accusing him of every crime which could disgrace humanity, and of every project which was likely to entail slavery and misery on his subjects. The burning of London, in 1666, the Popish plot, the murder of Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey, the assassination of the Earl of Essex, and even the poisoning of the late king, were indiscriminately laid to his charge. James was styled throughout the Duke of York, and the people were called upon

to defend themselves against his “idolatrous and bloody” designs. Lastly, Monmouth insisted that he himself had been born in lawful wedlock ; adding, however, that he would leave his claims to be decided upon by a free Parliament.

In the meantime, James had been far from neglectful of his own interests, and, moreover, he was at this time effectually supported by his Parliament. They presented an address to him, in which they bound themselves to assist and stand by him with their lives and fortunes ; a bill was passed attainting Monmouth of high treason ; a reward of 5,000*l.* was offered for his capture either alive or dead, and, moreover, the Commons voted a supply of 400,000*l.* to the king, “for his present extraordinary occasions.”

Having quitted Lyme on the fourth day after his landing, Monmouth had proceeded some distance on his way to Axminster, when he was informed that the Duke of Albemarle was in the neighbourhood with about four thousand of the Devonshire militia. This was the second and spendthrift duke, whom we have formerly seen engaged with Monmouth in a midnight brawl, and who now encountered his old friend under very different circumstances. They had advanced within a quarter of a mile of each other, when Albemarle, perceiving his followers to be disaffected, considered it prudent to order a retreat. That Monmouth neglected to pursue them was

a fatal mistake. He would have succeeded in obtaining arms and followers; the fame of his success would have greatly advanced his cause; many influential persons would no doubt have joined him, and in two days he would probably have found himself at the gates of Exeter. But he intended to wait, he said, till his men were better disciplined, and till his ranks had been swelled into a more formidable force.

Monmouth arrived at Taunton on the 18th of June, a week after his landing, having advanced in the meantime only twenty miles. Here, however, his reception must have exceeded even his most sanguine hopes. The houses were everywhere hung with green boughs and flowers, and so thronged were the streets with his admirers that he could with difficulty proceed. A standard, woven by the young ladies of the town, was solemnly presented to him by the hands of the fair enthusiasts themselves. The gift was accompanied by a Bible, which their spokeswoman, with a drawn sword in her hand, also publicly delivered to him. The duke expressed a transport which perhaps he really felt. "I have come into the field," he said, "to defend the truths contained in this book, and, if there be occasion for it, to seal it with my blood." His followers had now amounted to six thousand, and he would even have been more formidable but for the want of arms. Unfortunately, intoxicated with his grow-

ing success, he had now the folly to assume the title of king, and even went so far as to touch for the evil and to set a price on the head of King James. It must be remembered, on the other hand, that Monmouth had been taught from his boyhood to believe that the crown was a prize within his reach. When foreign princes died, he was the only subject, with the exception of the Duke of York, who had been invited to wear the purple cloak which is the exclusive mourning robe of royalty ; and, in the presence-chamber of his father, while the ancient nobility of the land had stood uncovered around, Monmouth and the Duke of York alone wore their hats before the king.

From Taunton, Monmouth proceeded to Bridgewater, Wells, and Frome, in all of which places he was solemnly proclaimed. Another fatal error consisted in these perpetual delays. The time which should have been spent in action was wasted in unprofitable parade.

CHAPTER VII.

JAMES, DUKE OF MONMOUTH.

Monmouth's Affairs Decline — His Despondency — Battle of Sedgemoor — Monmouth's Flight — Terrors of His Mind — His Humble Submissions to the King — Conducted to London — Colonel Legge Ordered to Stab Him Should His Rescue Be Attempted — His Interview with James at Whitehall — His Extraordinary Superstition — His Interview with His Duchess on the Morning of His Execution — Becomes Reconciled to His Fate — Bishop of St. Asaph's Account of His Behaviour — Monmouth's Devotion to Lady Henrietta Wentworth — Distressing Circumstances Which Attended His Execution — Some Account of the Duchess of Monmouth — Remainder of King Charles's Natural Children: The Duke of Southampton — Duke of Grafton — Duke of Northumberland — Duke of St. Albans — Duke of Richmond — Earl of Plymouth — Countess of Yarmouth — Countess of Sussex — Countess of Litchfield — Countess of Derwentwater — Barbara Fitzroy — Mary Walters.

WHILE Monmouth was thus trifling with his fortunes, King James had assembled a considerable force to arrest his hitherto triumphant progress. The advance of this formidable body, the news of his friend Argyle's defeat in Scotland, and his own want of artillery and money soon completely changed the aspect of Monmouth's affairs. The consequence was that the elation,

which the spoiled child of fortune had enjoyed on his first success, was speedily converted into the deepest despondency. He seems at one time to have half made up his mind to take ship at Pool ; but unwilling, perhaps, to leave his followers to their fate, he returned to the hospitable town of Bridgewater, with the intention of making a last desperate attempt to retrieve his fortunes.

It was not long before this opportunity presented itself. The Earl of Feversham, who commanded the king's forces, had established himself in the neighbouring village of Sedgemoor. The position was a weak one, and accordingly, influenced by this circumstance, as well as by the prevailing reports of the remissness of discipline on the part of the royalists, and their habitual nightly carousings, it was decided that a night attack should be made without loss of time on Feversham's quarters. "We have only," said Monmouth, "to lock the stable doors, and then seize the troopers in their beds." Accordingly, about eleven o'clock, on a foggy night on the 5th of July, preceded by a trustworthy guide, the invaders, silently and steadily, commenced their hazardous march toward the village of Sedgemoor. Unfortunately, about one o'clock in the morning, they fell suddenly in the darkness upon Lord Dum-barton's regiment, the result of which was that a promiscuous attack commenced, which had the effect of putting the whole of the royal army on

their guard. Between the royalists and their opponents ran a small stream, over which their guide was to have conducted the latter by an easy ford. As soon, however, as Monmouth's undisciplined forces came in sight of their foes, it was found impossible to restrain their impetuous valour, and they rushed furiously and indiscriminately forward. But all their valour and enthusiasm was to no purpose. They were compelled to retrace their steps, and, having in the meantime lost their guide, a considerable period elapsed before a fording-place was discovered. The royalists were now armed and prepared for them, and the fight was renewed with extraordinary fury. At the head of the king's forces were Lords Feversham and Churchill, afterward the great Duke of Marlborough, assisted by a singular but able coadjutor, the Bishop of Winchester,¹ who "performed singular service in the managing of the great guns." Monmouth fought with desperate courage at the head of his infantry, and such was the impetuosity of the onset of the Somersetshire

¹ Dr. Peter Mew, Bishop of Bath and Wells, had been translated to Winchester the previous year. He had been a captain in the army during the civil wars. Burnet, who is said to have been an expectant for his bishopric, speaks disparagingly of him. "He knew very little of divinity, or of any other learning, and was weak to a childish degree; yet obsequiousness and zeal raised him through several steps to this great see." Mew lived to a great age. He imagined himself to be a natural son of Emmanuel, Earl of Sunderland, who was killed at the battle of Newbury.

peasantry that at one moment the king's veteran forces were on the point of giving way. But the sudden flight of Monmouth's undisciplined cavalry, commanded by Lord Grey, at length decided the fortunes of the day, the enemy's horse being thus enabled to attack Monmouth's gallant peasantry in the rear. Thus, after an engagement of three hours, opposed on all sides, and their ammunition expended, they were compelled to yield. About fifteen hundred were killed and as many were taken prisoners, of whom Jeffreys was afterward the merciless hangman. "The Duke of Monmouth," says Reresby, "had from the very beginning of this desperate attempt behaved with the conduct of a great captain, as was allowed even by the king, who, in my hearing, said he had not made one false step." The day that the news of his defeat reached London, his duchess, with her two young sons, was unjustly sent to the Tower.

The unfortunate Monmouth had ridden about twenty miles, in hopes of finding a lurking-place amongst the friendly poachers and deer-stalkers of the New Forest, when his horse sank beneath him from fatigue. He then changed clothes with a peasant and proceeded on foot. Two days after the battle he was discovered by one Perkin, a servant, near Hollbridge in Dorsetshire, in a dry ditch, covered with fern-brakes. Evelyn says "his beard was grown so long and so gray as hardly to be known, had not his George discovered him,

which was found in his pocket." He not only offered no resistance, but trembled violently, and, according to some accounts, is said to have burst into tears. His whole stock of provisions consisted but of some peas, which he had gathered in a neighbouring field, and which were found in his pocket. He mentioned afterward that he had never enjoyed a night's rest, nor eat a meal in quiet, since the day of his landing, and, it seems, be had not been in bed for three weeks. His capture is thus announced in the *London Gazette*:

"WHITEHALL, July 8th,
at twelve o'clock at night.

"His Majesty has just now received an account that the late Duke of Monmouth was taken this morning in Dorsetshire, being hid in a ditch, and that he is in the hands of my Lord Lumley."

By Lord Lumley, Monmouth was conducted to Ringwood, where he remained two nights. His grief and the terrors of his mind at this period are described as extremely distressing. He had not only been nurtured too gently not to feel misfortune acutely, but he was also too well aware of James's merciless disposition to hope for pardon. The once graceful and gallant Monmouth, who had sought and gained renown on the field of battle, was unable to anticipate without horror the approaching terrors of the scaffold.

He appears to have fondly imagined that, could he only succeed in obtaining admission to the presence of James, he would be enabled to soften the iron nature of his uncle and former friend. Accordingly, from Ringwood he wrote to the king on the 8th July, making the humblest submissions, and imploring him to consent to an interview. “I have that,” he says, “to say to you, sir, that I hope may give you a long and happy reign: I am sure, when you hear me, you will be convinced of the care I have of your preservation, and how heartily I repent of what I have done.” He concludes with insisting on the same argument for their meeting. “I hope, sir, God Almighty will strike your heart with mercy and compassion for me, as he has done mine with the abhorrence of what I have done. Wherefore, sir, I hope I may live to show you how zealous I shall ever be for your service, and, could I say but one word in this letter, you would be convinced of it; but it is of that consequence that I dare not do it. Therefore, sir, I do beg of you once more to let me speak to you, for then you will be convinced how much I shall ever be,

“Your Majesty’s most humble and dutiful,
“MONMOUTH.”

It seems evident, from these passages, that the motive which subsequently induced James to admit his unfortunate nephew to an interview was the

hope of extracting from him the names and projects of his accomplices. It is chiefly in this light that they are curious.

The day after he had written to the king, we find Monmouth addressing the following appeal to the queen-dowager, who had always been his friend.

“MADAM:— Being in this unfortunate condition, and having none left but your Majesty that I think may have some compassion, and that for the last king’s sake, makes me take this boldness to beg of you to intercede for me. I would not desire your Majesty to do it, if I were not from the bottom of my heart convinced how I have been deceived into it, and how angry God Almighty is with me for it. But I hope, madam, your intercession will give me life to repent of it, and to show the king how really and truly I will serve him hereafter. And I hope, madam, your Majesty will be convinced that the life you save shall ever be devoted to your service; for I have been, and ever shall be,

“Your Majesty’s most dutiful and obedient servant,

“MONMOUTH.”

From Ringwood Monmouth was conducted by Lord Lumley and a body of militia to Winchester, and from thence, by way of Farnham Castle and Guildford, to Vauxhall, where he arrived on

the 13th of July. At Vauxhall he was received by Lord Dartmouth's regiment, who guarded him by water to Whitehall, whence, the same evening, he was carried to the Tower. Lord Dartmouth informs us that his uncle, Col. William Legge, who was in the same coach with him, had orders instantly to stab him, should his rescue be attempted by the populace. He was allowed only two days to prepare himself for his end.

That James was justified in taking away the life of one who had headed a dangerous rebellion against his authority, who had assumed the regal title, and had declared war against him without quarter, there can be little question. But that he should have raised Monmouth's hopes by admitting him to an interview, and afterward have handed him over to the executioner, was an act as indecent as it was merciless.

This fact, it appears by the Stuart Papers, was afterward admitted by James himself; but the stern bigot should have discovered it earlier. James and his wretched prisoner had so recently been competitors for the same prize, and success had been at one period so doubtful, that the interview could not fail to be one of painful interest. Besides, they had formerly lived on terms of friendship and equality; they had mingled night after night in the same scenes of splendour and social revelry; and, moreover, Monmouth was the nephew of James, and had been selected by him

to be the godfather of one of his children.¹ The meeting was ostensibly granted to the entreaties of the queen-dowager, but the hope of cheating Monmouth into a confession was obviously the real motive.

The memorable interview took place at Whitehall, the scene of Monmouth's former triumphs, and where he had passed the happiest days of his life. On the day after his arrival at the Tower the unhappy criminal was conducted to the apartment of Chiffinch, at Whitehall, and from thence carried after dinner into the presence of James and his queen. His arms were tied behind him by a silken rope, leaving, however, his hands at liberty. He trusted perhaps to save his life by those powers of persuasion which had so frequently softened his easy father, but which with the stern and implacable James proved entirely fruitless. On entering the apartment his behaviour is thus described in the Stuart Papers: "When the Duke of Monmouth was brought before the king, he fell upon his knees, crawling upon them to embrace those of his Majesty, and, forgetting the character of a hero, which he had so long pre-

¹ This child was Catherina Laura, christened by the Bishop of Durham, at St. James's in 1674. The godmothers were the Princesses Mary and Anne, afterward successively Queens of England. Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, attributes the original misunderstanding between James and the Duke of Monmouth to the inconstancy of one of their mistresses; unfortunately, however, he does not enter into particulars.

tended to, behaved himself with the greatest meanness and abjection imaginable, omitting no humiliation or pretence of sorrow and repentance, to move the king to compassion and mercy." As this account seems to have been dictated by James himself, the pusillanimity of his suppliant is not improbably exaggerated. Monmouth, however, certainly fell on his knees at the king's feet, and passionately implored him for mercy. He confessed with many tears that he deserved to die, but conjured the king to spare a life which henceforward should be ever dedicated to his service. "Remember," he added, pathetically, "I am your brother's son, and if you take away my life you shed your own blood." Had Monmouth really made important disclosures his life might have been spared, but either he had little to communicate, or else an unwillingness to sacrifice others closed his lips. James, though he refused to pardon Monmouth, yet had the meanness to take advantage of the duke's miserable condition, by extracting from him a declaration of his illegitimacy. According to Bishop Kennet, the queen, Mary of Modena, who was present, insulted the fallen duke in the most "arrogant and unmerciful manner;" the story, however, rests on his single authority. At length, finding further entreaty unavailing, Monmouth rose from his knees, and retired with a dignity he had not hitherto exhibited.

It was after this interview that James despatched a letter, of which the following is an extract, to his son-in-law, the Prince of Orange. It is dated the following day :

“WHITEHALL, July 14, 1685.

“The Duke of Monmouth seemed more concerned and desirous to live, and did behave himself not so well as I expected, nor so as one ought to have expected from one who had taken upon him to be king. I have signed the warrant for his execution to-morrow.”

Even after he had quitted the presence of James, hope scarcely appears to have deserted the unfortunate Monmouth. On his return to the Tower, whither he was reconducted by water, he passionately entreated Lord Dartmouth to intercede to save his life. “I know, my lord,” he said, “that you loved my father; for his sake, for God’s sake, try if there be room for mercy.” Lord Dartmouth, however, told him it was hopeless. Aware of the king’s weak point, Monmouth — so lately the chosen and boasted champion of Protestantism — even went so far as to cause an intimation to be conveyed to the king that he was willing to become a Roman Catholic. It was discovered, however, according to the Stuart Papers, “that it was more to save his life than his soul.” Nevertheless, as he had been bred in that faith, James entertained a hope that he might die in it, and,

with this view, sent his spiritual advisers to commune with him.

Monmouth, after his return to the Tower, is reported to have sent a letter to James, containing information of such vital importance as to induce a reasonable hope that it might have the effect of saving his life. This letter, it is said, was entrusted by the duke to Captain Scott, a connection of the Duchess of Monmouth, by whom it was delivered to Lord Sunderland, who destroyed it for his own ends. Sir Walter Scott, in his notes on Dryden, adds additional weight to this report. "I have often," he says, "heard this anecdote mentioned by my father, who was curious in historical antiquities, and who gave it on the report of his grandfather, to whom Captain Scott told the story." Since Sir Walter wrote this passage, a letter, addressed by Monmouth to King James, on the day previous to his execution, has been printed by Sir Henry Ellis, but, though of considerable interest, it contains no allusion to these private disclosures.¹ The letter is as follows :

"SIR:—I have received your Majesty's order this day that I am to die to-morrow. I was in

¹ On the other hand, Sir Walter Scott's statement is curiously corroborated by a memorandum of a Mr. Bowdler, found among the Clarendon Papers. In the pitiable state of Monmouth's mind, he may not improbably have written two different letters to James the same day.

hopes, sir, by what your Majesty said to me yesterday of taking care of my soul, that I should have had some little more time; for truly, sir, this is very short. I do beg of your Majesty, if it be possible, to let me have one day more, that I may go out of the world as a Christian ought.

“I had desired several times to speak to my Lord Arundel of Wardour, which I do desire still: I hope your Majesty will grant it to me; and I do beg of your Majesty to let me know by him if there is nothing in this world that can recall your sentence, or at least reprieve me for some time. I was in hopes I should have lived to have served you, which I think I could have done to a great degree, but your Majesty does not think it fit. Therefore, sir, I shall end my days with being satisfied that I had all the good intentions imaginable for it, and should have done it, being that I am your Majesty’s most dutiful

“MONMOUTH.

“I hope your Majesty will give Doctor Tennison leave to come to me, or any other that your Majesty will be pleased to grant me.”

There is a circumstance which renders this earnest entreaty for a reprieve, even of a day, of additional interest. Monmouth is said to have placed considerable faith in the prediction of a fortuneteller, that, should he outlive St. Swithin’s Day, he would be a great man. Certainly, it was a

remarkable coincidence that it should have proved the day on which he died. Nor is this the only evidence we possess of Monmouth's superstition. On the occasion of his capture a manuscript was found on his person, consisting of "spells, charms, and conjurations," written in his own hand. Archbishop Tennison also mentioned that, after Monmouth's death, there was discovered, underneath the stone of his ring, a charm which he had obtained from a German mountebank, professing to be a preservative in the day of battle or against imminent danger.

The evening before his execution, his wronged and neglected duchess expressed an earnest desire to be admitted to a parting interview with her condemned lord. As another woman had long occupied her place in Monmouth's affections, and had even lived with him as his wife, the interview must necessarily have been painful. The request was, nevertheless, acceded to by Monmouth. That other person was the Lady Henrietta Wentworth, of whom—as her connection with the duke was as romantic as it was criminal, and as her name was the last which fell from his lips—it may not be uninteresting to say a few words. She was the granddaughter and sole heiress of Thomas, Earl of Cleveland, by whose death in 1667 she had become Baroness Wentworth in her own right, and mistress of the noble manor of Toddington in Bedfordshire. Here she appears to have frequently

resided with her unfortunate lover, Lysons mentioning a plan of the stately old manor-house, in which two adjoining rooms were marked as the "Duke of Monmouth's parlour and my lady's parlour." The duke had always affected to regard her as his wife in the eyes of God, affirming that, as his almost infantine marriage had not been the choice of his heart, he was dissolved from its unpalatable ties. The Lady Henrietta returned his affection. She survived his execution but a few months, dying, as it was said, of a broken heart. She is buried in the parish church of Toddington, where her mother raised a costly monument to her memory. Only a few years ago her name, carved by her beloved Monmouth, was to be seen on one of the trees which stood in the neighbouring park.

Notwithstanding, however, her many wrongs, the duchess, by her repeated entreaties for mercy, and by the commiseration which she displayed for her husband's miserable condition, performed all that could have been expected even from the most affectionate wife. Evelyn says that the duke received her coldly; indeed, he principally addressed his conversation to Henry, Earl of Clarendon, who accompanied her, and whom he implored to intercede for his life. However, on the following morning, which was that of his execution, the duchess was again admitted. She was accompanied by her young children, and on this occasion was received

with more kindness by her unfortunate husband. From the manuscript of one who was present, we learn the following interesting particulars of what occurred. "His behaviour all the time," says the writer, "was brave and unmoved; and even during the last conversation and farewell with his lady and children, which was the movingest thing in the world, and which no bystander could see without melting into tears, he did not show the least concernedness. He declared before all the company how averse the duchess had been to all his irregular courses, and that she had never been uneasy to him on any occasion whatever but about women, and his failing of duty to the late king. And that she knew nothing of his last design, not having heard from himself a year before, which was his own fault, and no unkindness in her, because she knew not how to direct her letters to him. In that he gave her the kindest character that could be, and begged her pardon of his many failings and offences to her, and prayed her to continue her kindness and care to her poor children. At this expression she fell down on her knees, with her eyes full of tears, and begged him to pardon her if ever she had done anything to offend and displease him, and, embracing his knees, fell into a swoon, out of which they had much ado to raise her up in a good while after. A little before his children were brought to him, all crying about him; but he acquitted himself of these last

adieu with much composure, showing nothing of weakness or unmanliness.”¹

Dalrymple mentions a family report, “that on the morning of her husband’s execution, James sent a message to the duchess that he would breakfast with her, and that she admitted the visit, believing a pardon would accompany it.” Whether or no there be any truth in the story, James had sufficient generosity to restore to her her husband’s estate, which had been forfeited by his attainder. It was one of Monmouth’s last requests, that his children at least might not be ruined by his delinquencies.

As soon as Monmouth perceived his fate to be inevitable, he roused himself from his despondency, and prepared for the last stroke with a spirit and fortitude worthy of his natural character. Tennyson, afterward Archbishop of Canterbury, then Vicar of St. Martin’s, and the Bishops of Ely and Bath and Wells were permitted to assist him in his devotions, the two latter prelates sitting up with him the whole night that preceded his execution, and watching by him while he slept. Of the effect of their conversation with him, we have some account from Lloyd, Bishop of St. Asaph, who probably received it from one of his brother prelates. On the day after Monmouth’s execution,

¹ “Account of the actions and behaviour of the Duke of Monmouth, from the time he was taken to his execution, in a letter dated July 16, 1685. MS. in the Duke of Buccleugh’s library.”

he thus writes to the Bishop of Oxford. "They got him," he says, "to own that he and Lady Henrietta Wentworth had lived in all points like man and wife, but they could not get him to confess it was adultery. He acknowledged that he and his duchess were married by the law of the land, and therefore his children might inherit if the king pleased. But he did not consider what he did when he married her. He confessed that he had lived many years in all sorts of debauchery, but said he had repented of it, asked pardon, and doubted not that God had forgiven him. The next morning," adds the bishop, "he told them he had prayed that, if he was in error in that matter, God would convince him of it; but God had not convinced him, and therefore he believed it was no error." In this state of mind the bishops declined administering the sacrament to him, to which he merely replied that he was sorry for their determination. "He had lived dishonestly," says Evelyn, "with the Lady Henrietta Wentworth for two years. He obstinately asserted his conversation with that debauched woman to be no sin, whereupon he could not be persuaded to his last breath. The divines, who were sent to assist him, thought not fit to administer the holy communion with him. For the rest of his faults he professed great sorrow." Notwithstanding he acknowledged in writing that the late king had confessed to him he was never married to his

mother, he nevertheless refused to admit the sinfulness of his late rebellion, and persisted in merely speaking of it as an invasion.

On the fatal morning he was visited by the pious Tennison, who has left us a brief but interesting account of their interview. "I was sent for," he says, "to the Duke of Monmouth in the Tower, on the day of his execution, the duke knowing me better than the two prelates Bishop Ken and Bishop Turner. He took me aside to the window, and held a long conversation with me, too much upon his own follies. When, among other things, I mentioned a report of his Grace's preaching in the army, 'No,' said the duke, 'I never preached; nobody preached but Ferguson, and he very foolishly many times. That man,' says he, 'is a bloody villain.' When I minded him of being better reconciled to his duchess, he owned his heart had been turned from her, and he pretended the cause of it to be, that in his affliction she had gone to plays and into public companies; 'by which,' said he, 'I knew she did not love me.' When I charged him with his conversation with Mrs. Wentworth, he freely owned it, and said he had no children by her; but he had heard it was lawful to have one wife in the eye of the law, and another before God. I then took a Bible, and laboured to convince him of the falsehood and the ill consequences of such a principle. 'Well,' says he, 'but if a man be bred up in a

false notion, what shall he do when he has but two hours to live?' The duke pulled out a gold watch, and pressed me to carry it in his name to Mrs. Wentworth; which I positively refused, and said I could not be concerned in any such message or token to her. The duke did not seem at all profane or atheistical, but had rather a cast of enthusiasm in him."

About ten o'clock in the morning Monmouth was conducted, in the coach of the lieutenant of the Tower, between an avenue of soldiers, to Tower Hill. He was attended by a strong guard, who, if a rescue had been attempted, were prepared to shoot him. He mounted the scaffold without the least apparent fear, and amidst the sighs and tears of the populace, of whom he was still the idol. To these he addressed a brief farewell. "I shall say little," he commenced, "I come here, not to speak, but to die. I die a Protestant of the Church of England." Here the bishops interrupted him, telling him that, as he rejected the doctrine of non-resistance, he was not a member of their church. He then reverted to the subject nearest his heart, and spoke to the bystanders of his beloved Henrietta. She was a person, he said, of great honour and virtue, "a religious godly lady." The bishops reminded him of the heinousness of the sin of adultery, and begged him to desist from such sinful language. "No," he replied, "for these two years last past,

I have lived in no sin that I know of. I have wronged no person, and I am sure when I die I shall go to God; therefore I do not fear death, which you may see in my face." The bishops then commenced praying for him, and he knelt and joined them. At the end of a short prayer, which one of the prelates offered up for the king, Monmouth hesitated for a moment, but at length said, "Amen."

To the Lady Henrietta he sent his ring, watch, and toothpick-case, in the latter of which were found some Scripture allusions, supposed to be charms. To the executioner he gave six guineas; entrusting four more to a bystander, who was to present them to the headsman in the event of his performing his task with adroitness. He bid him be more merciful than he had been to the late Lord Russell, whom he had murdered by repeated strokes. Feeling the edge of the axe, he expressed some doubt whether it was of sufficient keenness. While he was undressing himself, the bishops exhorted him by their ejaculations. "God," they said, "accept your repentance! God accept your imperfect repentance! God accept your general repentance!" Then, refusing to have his eyes bandaged, he knelt down, and, laying his head upon the block, gave the appointed signal. The executioner, however, either from dismay or pity, struck so feeble a blow that Monmouth, to the horror of the spectators, raised his

head from the block, and looked him as if reproachfully in the face. The executioner actually made two more ineffectual efforts, and then, throwing down the bloody instrument, declared his incapacity to complete the work. As the body still moved, yells of horror and execration rose from the dense crowd assembled around the scaffold. At length the sheriff, and others, compelled the executioner again to take up the axe, and at two strokes more he severed the head from the body. So enraged were the multitude at this miserable scene of butchery, that it was with difficulty they could be restrained from tearing the executioner to pieces.¹ After the head had been sewn to the body, the remains of the duke were placed in a coffin covered with black velvet, and conveyed in a hearse to the Tower chapel, where they were interred under the communion-table of that most interesting but disgracefully neglected edifice.

Thus, on the 15th of July, 1685, in the thirty-sixth year of his age, fell the once brilliant and flattered Monmouth. His worshippers could scarcely believe that he had left them; indeed, such was the credulity of the vulgar, that many placed the most implicit belief in an idle story which was current at the period, namely, that

¹ The executioner of Monmouth was John Ketch, whose name has ever since been promiscuously given to his successors in that hateful office.

no fewer than five persons, exactly resembling Monmouth in person, had solemnly sworn to represent and to die for him if necessity required ; and that it was, in fact, one of these persons, and not their idol, who had perished on Tower Hill. So devoted were the peasantry of England to their idolised Monmouth — so convinced were they that he would some day or other reappear among them with his sweet smile and winning manners — that, thirteen years after his death, when an impostor assumed that magic name, the yeomanry of Sussex not only received and harboured him with the most affectionate devotion, but, on his being thrown into gaol for his fraud, the farmers, notwithstanding the favours which the adventurer had profligately won from their wives and daughters, subscribed large sums for his maintenance, and at the Horsham Assizes gave evidence in court in his favour. Even as late as the reign of George the Third, we find Voltaire thinking it worth while to contradict a report that “The Man in the Iron Mask” and the Duke of Monmouth were the same person.

James unworthily exulted over the fate of his victim. After his execution he caused two medals to be struck, in commemoration of the failure of his enterprise, one of which was sufficiently offensive. It represented the bust of Monmouth on one side, but without any inscription ; on the reverse was seen a young man falling into the

sea from a high rock, which he was represented as having vainly attempted to climb. On the summit of the rock were three crowns amidst thorns and brambles, with the words *Superi risere*, July 6th, 1685. His memory in other respects was unnecessarily insulted. It appears, by the records of the Order of the Garter, that, in the presence of the garter king-at-arms and the heralds, his banner and the other insignia of the order were not only removed from St. George's Chapel at Windsor, but were treated with every sort of indignity, and actually kicked into the castle ditch.

By his duchess, Monmouth was the father of six children, of whom but three survived their infancy. Of these three, James, Earl of Dalkeith, died on the 14th of March, 1705, at the age of twenty-one, leaving a son, Francis, who became second Duke of Buccleugh. Henry, created, 29th March, 1706, Earl of Deloraine, died on the 11th of April, 1739; and, lastly, the Lady Anne died in August, 1685, having been so deeply affected by the death of her father, whom she visited in his last moments in the Tower, that she survived him scarcely a month. Monmouth also left four natural children — two sons and two daughters — by Eleanor, a daughter of Sir Robert Needham, Knight. They all died young with the exception of Henrietta, who, in 1697, became the third wife of Charles Powlet, Marquis of Winchester, afterward first Duke of Bolton.

In May, 1688, nearly three years after the death of Monmouth, the duchess became the second wife of Charles, third Lord Cornwallis,¹ by whom she had a son and two daughters, who all died unmarried. She is said to have borne her sorrows with decency, for

“she had known adversity,
Though born in such a high degree;
In pride of power, in beauty’s bloom,
Had wept o’er Monmouth’s bloody tomb.”

— *Lay of Last Minstrel.*

The duchess died on the 6th of February, 1702, in her fifty-first year, and was buried at Dalkeith. As her husband’s attainder did not extend to Scotland, the dukedom of Buccleugh descended to her heirs. The present duke is the lineal descendant of the neglected duchess and her ill-fated lord.

¹ His first wife was Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Stephen Fox, Knight, to whom he was married 27th December, 1673, at the age of nineteen. De Grammont says: “This lord had married the daughter of Sir Stephen Fox, treasurer of the king’s household, one of the richest and most regular men in England. His son-in-law, on the contrary, was a young spendthrift, was very extravagant, loved gaming, lost as much as any one would trust him, but was not quite so ready in paying. His father-in-law disapproved of his conduct, paid his debts, and gave him a lecture at the same time.” His vices, however, seem to have been timely corrected. King William admitted him to his friendship, and he became, in that gloomy reign, a member of the Privy Council, and First Lord of the Admiralty. He died 29th of April, 1698.

The conclusion of our memoir of the Duke of Monmouth seems to be the fittest place for introducing a brief notice of the remainder of King Charles's natural children, at least of those who attained to years of maturity. The events of their lives are neither so stirring, nor their characters so marked, as to require very lengthened details.

CHARLES FITZROY, DUKE OF SOUTHAMPTON, eldest son of the Duchess of Cleveland by King Charles, was born in King Street, Westminster, in June, 1662. He was raised to the title on the 10th of September, 1675, having been previously installed a Knight of the Garter. He married first Mary, daughter of Sir Henry Wood, Knight, and, secondly, Alice, daughter of Sir William Pulteney, Knight, of Misterton, in Leicestershire, by whom he had three sons and two daughters. On the death of his mother, in 1709, he succeeded to her honours, and assumed the title of Cleveland. He died on the 9th of September, 1730, and was succeeded by his son, William, who married Henrietta Finch, daughter of Daniel, Earl of Nottingham. On the death of the second duke, in 1774, the titles of Cleveland and Southampton became extinct.

HENRY FITZROY, DUKE OF GRAFTON, is styled the second son of the Duchess of Cleveland by King Charles the Second. Charles, however, long

refused to own him, and his parentage consequently appears to be somewhat questionable. He was born September the 20th, 1663. On the first of August, 1672, when only nine years old, he was married in the presence of the king and his courtiers, to Isabella, sole daughter of Henry Bennet, Earl of Arlington, an infant of the age of five years. A few days afterward, 16th of August, 1672, he was created, by letters patent, Baron of Sudbury, Viscount Ipswich, and Earl of Euston, in the county of Suffolk, and, September 11, 1675, Duke of Grafton in Northamptonshire.

On the 6th of November, 1679, he was remarried to his young wife, in the apartments of the Earl of Arlington, at Whitehall. Evelyn, who was present at both ceremonies, styles her a "sweet, beautiful, and virtuous child." "The young duke," he says, "had been rudely bred, but was exceedingly handsome, and far surpassed any other of the king's natural children." Shortly after his marriage, he was sent to sea under the charge of Sir John Bury, Vice-Admiral of England, with whom he afterward served during several expeditions. On the 30th of September, 1680, he was installed a Knight of the Garter by proxy, Sir Edward Villiers being his representative.¹

¹ The Duke of Grafton was the fortunate holder of several appointments. On the 15th of December, 1681, he was elected one of the elder brethren of the Trinity House. On the 30th of the same month he was appointed colonel of the first regiment

At the coronation of James the Second, he filled the office of Lord High Constable of England. In Monmouth's rebellion, which followed shortly afterward, he took up arms against his unfortunate half-brother, and in an encounter which preceded the battle of Sedgemoor behaved with great gallantry, and narrowly escaped with his life. The following year we find him engaged as principal in two duels, both of which proved fatal to his antagonists. The first was fought on the 2d of February, 1686, with John, second son of Francis, eleventh Earl of Shrewsbury; the other was with a brother of William, ninth Earl of Derby. In the latter affair Evelyn says he received an "insufferable provocation," but the particulars have not reached us. About the month of October, 1687, he sailed for Tunis, and, after having "brought the corsairs of that place to amity," returned to England in March, 1688. On the landing of the Prince of Orange he was one of the first who deserted the fortunes of James, and, at the coronation of William and Mary, carried the orb in the procession.

While leading an assault at the siege of Cork, in 1690, he received a wound in his side from a of foot guards. In 1682 he was raised to be Vice-Admiral of England, and in 1684 was sworn Recorder of Edmondsbury, in Suffolk. In 1685 he was appointed *Custos-rotulorum* and Lord-lieutenant of that county; Remembrancer of the First-fruits office, Ranger of Whittlebury Forest in Northamptonshire, and Gamekeeper at Newmarket.

gunshot, of the effects of which he died on the 9th of October in that year, at the age of twenty-seven. His body was brought to England and buried at Euston, in Suffolk. Burnet speaks of him as a gallant but rough man. “He was the more lamented,” he says, “as being the person of all King Charles’s children of whom there was the greatest hope; he was brave, and probably would have become a great man at sea.” The duke, however, seems to have been sufficiently yielding as a politician. When the Duke of Somerset declined presenting the papal nuncio at the court of James the Second, as being an unconstitutional act, Grafton was found accommodating enough to undertake the required office. Although at the revolution he figures as one of the leading champions of Protestantism, he appears to have been but little cognisant of the merits of that great constitutional question, and almost as indifferent as to its success. When King James on one occasion took him to task on account of his want of religion, “I own,” he said, “that I have no conscience myself, but I belong to a party that has.” There is a doggerel epitaph on him in the “State Poems,” which commences :

“Beneath this place
Is stowed his grace,
The Duke of Grafton.
As sharp a blade
As e’er was made,
Or e’er had haft on.”

There are other stanzas, but they have even less merit.

GEORGE FITZROY, DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND, was the third son of Charles by the Duchess of Cleveland. He was born on the 28th December, 1655, in one of the Fellows' rooms in Merton College, Oxford, the court having taken refuge there during the great plague. On the 1st of October, 1674, he was created Baron of Pontefract, Viscount Falmouth, and Earl of Northumberland. He was raised to a dukedom on the 6th of April, 1632, and the following year was elected a Knight of the Garter. He seems to have excelled in all manly sports, and Evelyn speaks of him as a "graceful person and excellent rider." "I dined," he says, "at Sir Stephen Fox's, with the Duke of Northumberland. He seemed to be a young gentleman of good capacity, well-bred, civil, and modest, newly come from travel, and made his campaign at the siege of Luxemburg. Of all his Majesty's children, of whom we have now six dukes, this seems the most accomplished and worth the owning; he is extraordinary handsome and well-shaped." Macky says, in his memoirs, "He is a man of honour, nice in paying his debts, and living well with his neighbours in the country; does not much care for the conversation of men of quality and business; is a tall black man, like his father the king." To this passage Swift added in

MS. : "He was a most worthy person, very good-natured, and had very good sense." In 1685 he married Catherine, daughter of Robert Wheatly, of Brecknock, Berks, and widow of Thomas Lucy, Esq., of Charlecote, in the county of Warwick. Anthony Wood says: "There was committed a clandestine marriage between him and a woman of ordinary extract, widow of one Captain Lucy, of Charlecot in Warwickshire, but they were, as it seems, soon after parted." The fact is evident, not only that some mystery hung over their union, but that Northumberland endeavoured to rid himself of his wife by other means than those which the law prescribes on the occasion of matrimonial misunderstandings. In a contemporary poem, entitled the "Lover's Session," we find :

" Northumberland now to his trial stood forth,
And pleaded the preference due to his birth ;
No fool he did hope, howe'er eminent, would
Presume to compare with a fool of the blood.

" Appealing besides to his scandalous marriage,
His beautiful face, and his dull stupid carriage,
To a soul without sense of truth, honour, or wit,
If e'er man was formed for a woman so fit.

" But his prince-like project to kidnap his wife,
And a lady so free to make pris'ner for life ;
Was tyranny to which the sex ne'er would submit,
And an ill-natured fool they liked worse than a wit."

In another poem, entitled "A song to the old tune of taking of snuff is the mode of the court,"

the scandal, whatever it may have been, is again referred to.

“ Since his grace could prefer
The poulterer’s heir,
To the great match his uncle had made him ;
‘ Twere just if the king
Took away his blue string,
And sewed him on two to lead him.

“ That the lady was sent
To a convent at Ghent,
Was the counsel of kidnapping Grafton ;
And we now may foretell,
That all will go well,
Since the rough blockhead governs the soft one.”

The duchess, after the death of her husband, married Philip Bissex, Bishop of Hereford. “ She gave him her hand,” it is said, “ because she had, by mistake, received the pressure of his lips in the dark, in a kiss intended for her waiting gentlewoman.” The bishop had previously married Bridget, widow of Charles Fitzcharles, Earl of Plymouth, another natural son of Charles II.¹

At the revolution, the duke declared for King

¹ The bishop, who is said to have been strikingly handsome, died 6th September, 1725, at the age of fifty-five. He has the merit of having expended considerable sums in repairing the cathedral and churches of Hereford. He was buried in the former edifice, where there is a conspicuous monument to his memory.

William, who, in 1701, rewarded him with the post of Constable of Windsor Castle and the lord-lieutenancy of the county of Surrey. Queen Anne made him Lord-lieutenant of Berkshire, lieutenant-general of her forces, and a Lord of the Privy Council. He died on the 3d of July, 1716, without issue, when his titles became extinct.

CHARLES BEAUCLERK, DUKE OF ST. ALBANS, was the son of Charles the Second by Nell Gwynn. He was born in Lincoln's Inn Fields, May the 8th, 1670. On December 27, 1676, he was created Baron of Heddington and Earl of Burford, both in Oxfordshire; and on the 10th of January, 1684, Duke of St. Albans. Like most of his brothers, he had a taste for a military life, and in 1688, at the age of eighteen, acquired a reputation for courage at the siege of Belgrade. At the revolution, being then serving in the emperor's army in Hungary, he sent in his allegiance to King William, and subsequently made the campaign of 1693 with that monarch. The duke was in favour with several successive sovereigns. His father, King Charles, made him Registrar of the High Court of Chancery and Master-falconer of England; King William appointed him Captain of the Band of Pensioners and a lord of the bed-chamber; and Queen Anne continued him in the command of the Pensioners, as did afterward George the First. The latter monarch also con-

stituted him Lord-lieutenant and *Custos-rotulorum* of Berkshire, and, in 1718, honoured him with the Garter. In addition to these appointments he was High Steward of Windsor, and of Oakingham, in Berkshire. Macky says of him: “He is a gentleman every way *de bon naturel*, well bred, doth not love business; is well affected to the constitution of his country. He is of a black complexion, not so tall as the Duke of Northumberland, yet very like King Charles.” He had the good fortune to marry, 13th April, 1694, Diana, sole daughter and heir of Aubrey De Vere, twentieth and last Earl of Oxford, the last scion of one of the proudest lines in England. She is celebrated by an unknown poet in the following happy lines:

“The saints above can ask, but not bestow:—
This saint can give all happiness below.
The line of Vere, so long renowned in arms,
Concludes with lustre in St. Alban’s charms:
Her conquering eyes have made their race complete,
They rose in valour, and in beauty set.”

The duke died on the 11th May, 1726, in his fifty-sixth year, leaving eight sons. His duchess, who became lady of the bedchamber and of the stole to Queen Caroline, when Princess of Wales, died on the 15th of January, 1742. By Nell Gwynn, Charles had another son, James Beauclerk, who was born 25th December, 1671, and who died in France in September, 1680.

CHARLES LENNOX, DUKE OF RICHMOND, another of the expensive brood whom Charles's amorous profligacy entailed on his subjects, was the son of that monarch by Louise de Quéroualle, Duchess of Portsmouth. He was born July 29, 1672. His mother was so eager for his advancement, that in his third year, by letters patent dated August 9, 1675, he was created Baron of Settrington in Yorkshire, Earl of March, and Duke of Richmond in the same county. To these honours were shortly afterward added the estates and dukedom of Lennox in Scotland, which had lapsed to the crown. Evelyn styles him "a very pretty boy." In his twelfth year, April 7, 1681, he was made Knight of the Garter. A somewhat curious anecdote is connected with this circumstance. It had formerly been the custom for the knights of the order to wear the blue riband around the neck, with the George pendant on the centre of the breast. Shortly, however, after the young duke's installation, Madame de Quéroualle presented the child to the king with the riband over his right shoulder, as it is now worn. Charles was so pleased with the conceit that he desired the fashion—which in fact has ever since been adhered to—should be generally adopted.

It was probably to gratify the rapacity of his mother that the duke, almost in his childhood, was appointed master of the horse to the king. The duties of the office were of course performed

by deputy. On the accession of James, in consequence of his mother having been an advocate for the Bill of Exclusion, he was deprived of the lucrative post. With King William he appears to have been a favourite. He served with him as one of his aides-de-camp in Flanders, and was also a lord of the bedchamber to George the First. The duke married in January, 1693, Anne, daughter of Francis, Lord Brudenell, and widow of John, the son of the first Lord Bellasis of Worlaby. By this lady he had one son, Charles, who succeeded him in the title, and two daughters. The duke died at Goodwood, May 27, 1723, and was buried in Henry the Seventh's Chapel. His remains, however, were afterward removed to Chichester Cathedral. He had the fine breeding and easy temper of his father. According to Macky, he was "good-natured to a fault, very well bred, with many valuable things in him; was an enemy to business, very credulous, well shaped, black complexion, much like King Charles." Swift, on the other hand, denounces him as "a shallow coxcomb."

CHARLES FITZCHARLES, EARL OF PLYMOUTH, was born in 1657, during the exile of his father. His mother was Catherine, daughter of Thomas Peg, Esquire, of Yeldersley, in Derbyshire. Little is known of this lady but that she possessed great beauty, which is said to have been inherited by

her son. After the discontinuance of her intimacy with Charles, she married Sir Edward Green, Baronet, of Essex. On the 29th of July, 1675, the king created her son Baron Dartmouth, Viscount Totness, and Earl of Plymouth. Hitherto, from his foreign education, he had been more generally known as Don Carlos. He married Bridget, daughter of Thomas Osborne, first Duke of Leeds, who, at his death, united herself to Dr. Philip Bisse, Bishop of Hereford. The little that we know of the earl, whose natural abilities are said to have been considerable, is at least in his favour. He was the friend of poor Otway, the dramatic poet, for whom he procured a cornet's commission in a regiment of horse serving in Flanders. When his friend Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, in consequence of his attachment to Queen Anne (then Princess of Denmark), was sent to Tangier, it was reported that the duke was purposely despatched in a leaky vessel in order to get rid of him. Nevertheless the Earl of Plymouth, we are told, notwithstanding he was sensible of the danger, insisted on accompanying him. He was destined never to return. Having been seized by a bloody flux, he died during the course of the siege of that place, on the 17th October, 1680, at the age of twenty-three. His remains were brought to England, and, if the supposition of Anthony Wood be correct, they were interred in Henry the Seventh's Chapel, at Westminster.

Leaving no children, the title became extinct. By Mrs. Catherine Peg, Charles had also a daughter, who bore her mother's name and died in early youth.

CHARLOTTE JEMIMA HENRIETTA MARIA BOYLE, sometimes called FITZROY, was the daughter of Charles the Second by Elizabeth, daughter of Sir William Killigrew, who, after her frailty, became the wife of Francis Boyle, Viscount Shannon. The subject of the present notice married James Howard, grandson to the Earl of Suffolk, by whom she had one child, Stuarta Howard, who was afterward maid of honour to Queen Mary, and who died unmarried in 1706. Mrs. Howard subsequently married William Paston, second Earl of Yarmouth. By her second husband she had three sons, who severally died without male issue, and two daughters. The countess died July 28, 1684, at her house in Pall Mall, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

ANNE FITZROY, OR PALMER, COUNTESS OF SUSSEX, eldest daughter of the Duchess of Cleveland by her royal lover, was born on the 29th February, 1662. She married, at the age of twelve, Thomas Lennard, fifteenth Lord Dacre, created, 5th December, 1674, Earl of Sussex; a popular but extravagant man. If we may judge from the following extract of a letter from her mother to

Charles, dated "Paris, Tuesday the 28th, 1678," she must have been almost as imperious as her beautiful parent. "I was never," says the duchess, "so surprised in my whole lifetime as I was at my coming hither, to find my Lady Sussex gone from my house and monastery where I left her, and this letter from her, which I here send you the copy of. I never in my whole lifetime heard of such government of herself as she has had since I went into England. She has never been in the monastery two days together, but every day gone out with the ambassador,¹ and has often lain four days together at my house, and sent for her meat to the ambassador; he being always with her till five o'clock in the morning, they two shut up together alone, and would not let my *maitre d'hôtel* wait, nor any of my servants, only the ambassador's. This has made so great a noise at Paris that she is now the whole dis-course. I am so much afflicted that I can hardly write this for crying, to see a child, that I doted on as I did on her, should make me so ill a return, and join with the worst of men to ruin me." Lady Sussex died on the 16th May, 1721, having had issue by her husband two sons, who died young, and two daughters, of whom Anne, the youngest, became sole heir to her father, and Baroness Dacre, in her own right.

¹ Ralph Montague, afterwards Duke of Montague. He died 7th March, 1709.

CHARLOTTE FITZROY, COUNTESS OF LITCHFIELD, was a younger sister of the Countess of Sussex. She was born on the 5th September, 1664, and at the age of thirteen married Sir Edward Henry Lee, Baronet, of Ditchley, in Oxfordshire, created, 5th June, 1674, Baron of Spelsbury, Viscount Quarendon, and Earl of Litchfield, by whom she had thirteen sons and five daughters. We know but little of her except that she was beautiful. She died on the 17th February, 1718.

MARY TUDOR, COUNTESS OF DERWENTWATER, was another daughter of King Charles by Mary Davis, a handsome actress. She was born on the 16th October, 1673, and was married, when only fourteen, to Francis Radcliffe, second Earl of Derwentwater, by whom she was the mother of the ill-fated James, Earl of Derwentwater, who was beheaded for his share in the rebellion of 1715. After the death of her first husband she married Henry Graham, Esquire, M.P. for Westmoreland, who died in 1707; and thirdly "N. Rooke," son and heir of Brigadier-General Rooke. The date of her death is nowhere recorded.

BARBARA FITZROY, youngest daughter of the Duchess of Cleveland, was born on the 16th of July, 1672. The king acknowledged her in public, but disavowed her in private. She became a

nun in the English nunnery of Pontoise in France.

It may be remarked that the duchess's husband, Lord Castlemaine, believed her to be his daughter, and bequeathed her his estate. Lord Chesterfield, whom she is said to have resembled in her features, was another claimant for the doubtful honour of having given her birth. Charles, however, always insisted on acknowledging her as his child.

MARY WALTERS, daughter of the beautiful Lucy Walters or Barlow, was sister to the Duke of Monmouth. She was the reputed child of Charles the Second, but her mother proved so notoriously unfaithful that he refused to acknowledge her child as his daughter. She married first, William Sarsfield, Esquire, elder brother of Patrick, Earl of Lucan ; and afterward William Fanshawe, Esquire, master of the requests to Charles the Second. She died in April, 1693, leaving issue by her last husband one son and four daughters.

CHAPTER VIII.

MARY VILLIERS, DUCHESS OF RICHMOND.

Her Accomplishments and Splendid Fortunes — She Is Weaned without the King's Permission — Curious Letter Addressed by Her Mother to King James — Her Almost Infantine Marriage — Death of Her Young Husband — Her Narrow Escape from Being Shot — Her Second Marriage (to the Duke of Richmond) — Character of the Duke — The Duchess's Third Marriage (to Thomas Howard) — Her Position at the Court of Charles II. — Sides with Nell Gwynn against the Duchess of Portsmouth — Introduces Her Niece to the King — Lampooned by Rochester — Her Death.

Of one whose fortunes were so splendid, whose conversation is said to have been fascinating, and whose charms were the envy of her contemporaries, it is extraordinary how few particulars are known. She was the eldest child of the great favourite, George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, and was born in 1623.

The following letter from her mother to King James the First, excusing herself for weaning her infant without his Majesty's permission, is too curious to be omitted.

“ May it please your Majesty,
“ I have received the two boxes of dried plums

and grapes, and the box of violet cakes, and chickens ; for all which I most humbly thank your Majesty.

“ I hope my Lord Annan has told your Majesty that I did mean to wean Mall very shortly. I would not by any means have done it, till I had first made your Majesty acquainted with it ; and by reason my cousin Bret’s boy has been ill of late, for fear she should grieve and spill her milk, makes me very desirous to wean her ; and I think she is old enough, and I hope will endure her weaning very well ; for I think there was never child cared less for the breast than she does ; so I do intend to make trial this night how she will endure it. This day, praying for your Majesty’s health and long life, I humbly take my leave.

“ Your Majesty’s most humble servant,
“ K. BUCKINGHAM.”

On the 8th of January, 1634, when but eleven years old, the Lady Mary Villiers was married to Charles, Lord Herbert, eldest son of the “memorable simpleton,” Philip, Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery. The following entry occurs in the diary of Archbishop Laud : “ January 8th. I married the Lord Charles Herbert and the Lady Mary, daughter of the Duke of Buckingham, in the closet at Whitehall.” The event is celebrated by Davenant in some indifferent verses. The marriage was private, and had been hurried for-

ward by her mother, in consequence of the child having formed a strong, but no doubt evanescent, attachment for Philip Herbert, a younger brother of her future husband. At the express desire of Charles the First, she was educated in the family of that monarch, and became the playfellow of his children.

Her youthful husband dying at Florence the year after their union, we find the beautiful child, though still almost an infant, appearing at court wearing the solemn mockery of a widow's weeds. In this singular costume she was much taken notice of, and her future loveliness was fondly predicted.

Madame Dunois relates an agreeable anecdote of her childhood. "One day," says that lady, "she had climbed a tree in the king's little garden to gather some fruit. As nobody was permitted to come in there, this circumstance, together with her black garb and long veil, which spread over the twigs of the tree, made the king, who perceived her at a distance, imagine some strange bird had perched in the tree. Mr. Porter, a young courtier, and much in favour with the king, being a handsome person and extremely gallant and entertaining, was then with him. The king, knowing him to be an excellent marksman, pointed to what he supposed to be a large bird, and desired him to kill it. Mr. Porter, looking for some time toward the place, and find-

ing the bird out of reach of his ball, told the king he would take his fusee, and in a moment bring him the butterfly. But he was ready to burst with laughing when, approaching the tree, he discovered the countess. She smiled at him with an innocent air, pelting him with the fruit she had gathered ; whilst he took more particular notice than he ever had done before of her beauty, the clearness of her skin, and the brightness of her eyes. ‘What have you there, Porter ?’ said she : ‘what, can’t you speak ? are you bewitched ?’ ‘Oh, madam !’ he replied, ‘did you know what brought me here, you would be sensible I have sufficient reason to be surprised : the king happening to espy you in the tree, and taking you for a bird, you may guess on what errand I was sent here.’ ‘What,’ cried she, ‘to kill me ?’ ‘Yes, to kill you, madame,’ replied he ; ‘I promised to bring the king some of your feathers.’ ‘Ha, ha,’ said she, laughing, ‘you must be as good as your word ; we will play a merry game with him : I will put myself into a large hamper, and so be carried into his apartment.’ She sent him immediately for a hamper ; and one of her gentlemen taking hold of it, and Mr. Porter of the other end, he told her a thousand pretty things as they went along, which she replied to with great vivacity. In this manner she passed her time pleasantly enough in the hamper, till Mr. Porter, presenting it to the king, told him he had the good fortune to take the butterfly alive ;

Frances Stewart, Duchess of Richmond.
Photo-etching after the painting by Sir Peter Lely.



which was so beautiful, that had he killed it he should never have outlived it himself. His Majesty, eager to see it, opened the hamper, when the young countess, clasping her arms about his neck, furnished matter for a most agreeable surprise. We must not wonder that she embraced the king in so familiar a way, for everybody knows they were bred up together, and that he looked upon her no otherwise than his own sister. Ever since that time she has been known by the name of butterfly, and in several courts of Europe that name is oftener given her than her own title." Madame Dunois speaks of her in after life as having been "extremely beautiful, and of a mien and presence noble and majestic."

She was still extremely young when the king married her to his own relation, James Stuart, Duke of Lennox, created, 8th of March, 1641, Duke of Richmond, and a Knight of the Garter. "August 3, 1637," writes Archbishop Laud in his diary, "I married James, Duke of Lennox, to the Lady Mary Villiers, sole daughter to the Lord Duke of Buckingham: the marriage was in my chapel at Lambeth, the day rainy, the king present." The duke is well known from the prominent share which he took, and from the services which he performed for his royal kinsman, during the civil troubles. "He was a man," says Clarendon, "of very good parts and an excellent understanding; yet, which is no common infirmity,

so diffident of himself that he was sometimes led by men who judged much worse; he was of a great and haughty spirit, and so punctual in point of honour, that he never swerved a tittle." Dying in 1655, in middle age, he was denied the satisfaction of beholding the Restoration. His duchess bore him one son, Esme, Duke of Richmond, who died unmarried in 1660. They had also a daughter, Mary, who married Richard Butler, Earl of Arran.

The third and last husband of the Duchess of Richmond was a person who made no inconsiderable figure at the court of Charles the Second. This was Thomas Howard, fourth son of Sir William Howard, and brother of Charles, first Earl of Carlisle. De Grammont says: "There was not a braver nor a better bred man in England; though he was of a modest demeanour, and his manners appeared gentle and pacific, no person was more spirited or more passionate." The discovery of his high spirit, unfortunately for his antagonist, was made by the famous lady-killer, Henry Jermyn. The latter had been fool enough to interfere in an intrigue, in which Howard had entangled himself with Lady Shrewsbury. Howard instantly challenged him, and, having wounded him in three places, left him on the field with little hopes of recovery.¹ The duchess lost her third husband in 1678.

¹ There was a Thomas Howard, master of the horse to the Princess of Orange, daughter of Charles I., who figures in Thur-

At the Restoration, the Duchess of Richmond had somewhat passed the meridian of youth and beauty. Those charms, which ought to have dazzled the voluptuous court of Charles the Second, and whose bloom should have been handed down to us on the canvas of Lely, had been ignominiously wasted during the gloomy dominion of Cromwell. Her name, consequently, but seldom figures in the gay annals of the time, and it was not till the Duchess of Portsmouth became the reigning sultana that we find her implicated in its discreditable intrigues. In whatever circumstance her quarrel with that meddling beauty may have originated, it is certain that she endeavoured to undermine her in the affections of Charles. She not only sided with Nell Gwynn, the sworn enemy of the Duchess of Portsmouth, but even introduced to the king a niece of her last husband, a lovely and bashful girl, Miss Lawson, in hopes she would alienate the affections of the king from her adversary.

If we are to attach any credit to some contemporary verses, attributed to Lord Rochester, the closing years of “old Richmond”—for thus the once beautiful and fascinating Mary Villiers is familiarly designated—were anything but respect-

loe’s correspondence as a spy to Cromwell, and who was a successful lover of Lucy Walters; this person, however, would rather seem to have been a son of Theophilus, Earl of Suffolk, though the identity is far from clear.

able. The following lines occur in an abusive lampoon on Charles :

“ Old Richmond, making thee a glorious punk,
Shall twice a day with brandy now be drunk :
Her brother Buckingham shall be restor'd,
Nelly a countess, L—— be a lord.”

The blank in the fourth line should probably be filled up with Lawson. The person meant seems to have been Sir John Lawson, Bart., of Brough, in Yorkshire, the father of the attractive beauty who had so recently been presented at the dangerous court of the “ Merry Monarch.”

The Duchess of Richmond died in 1685, in the sixty-third year of her age ; but of the particulars of her dissolution and burial we have no record.

CHAPTER IX.

MARY FAIRFAX, DUCHESS OF BUCKINGHAM.

A Follower of Her Father's Camp when only Five Years Old — Her Marriage with the Reprobate Duke of Buckingham — Her Character — Mixes in the Intrigues of the Court — Description of Her Person — Her Death and Burial.

THIS spiritless but amiable lady was the only daughter of Thomas, Lord Fairfax, the celebrated Parliamentary general. She was born in 1639. When only five years old, she was a follower of her father's camp in the civil wars, a circumstance which is fondly dwelt upon by Fairfax in his memoirs. At his retreat from Bradford, she underwent a journey of incredible length, seated the whole time before a maid servant on horseback. According to the interesting account bequeathed us by her father, she fainted frequently during the retreat, and on one occasion he even hung in agony over his child, in the belief that she was on the point of death. Painful as it was to the fond father to part from his darling, he was compelled to leave her in a house by the roadside, under the care of her maid, "with little hopes," he says, "of my ever seeing her again."

On the 6th of September, 1657, she had the misfortune to become the wife of George Villiers, the witty and reprobate Duke of Buckingham. Brian Fairfax, in his life of her husband, styles her a virtuous and pious lady in a vicious court, and adds, that she lived “lovingly and decently” with her profligate lord. She certainly loved him, and was submissive enough to bear patiently with his repeated desertions and adulteries. “The Duchess of Buckingham,” says Madame Dunois, “has merit and virtue. She is little, brown, and lean; but had she been the most beautiful of her sex, the being his wife would have been alone sufficient to have inspired him with dislike. Though she knew he was always intriguing, yet she never spoke of it, and had complaisance enough to entertain his mistresses, and even to lodge them in her house; and all this she suffered because she loved him.” We have elsewhere mentioned that, in 1666, when a proclamation was issued for apprehending Buckingham on account of his conspiracy against the government, she contrived to outride the sergeant-at-arms, and, by a timely warning, afforded an opportunity to her husband to escape. Buckingham, though he disliked her person, appears to have availed himself of her services whenever he had the slightest occasion to make use of them.

As the duchess willingly mingled in all the gay parties of the court of Charles, her father’s Pres-

byterian principles were probably anything but acceptable to her. On the other hand, scandal never tampered with her name. And yet, notwithstanding her admitted purity, she seems to have taken a singular, and not very creditable, interest in the disgraceful amatory as well as political intrigues of the period. Pepys mentions her being one of the "committee" for inflaming the king's attachment to Miss Stewart, and James the Second in his diary records a further instance of her taste for intrigue. The latter writes, 18th April, 1669: "About this time Buckingham went to Newhall, to persuade the general [the Duke of Albemarle] to the breaking of Parliament; and to resign his post and accept that of the admiralty. But Albemarle refused to consent to either. The Duchess of Buckingham and Lady Hervey met at the same time, to advise the Duchess of Albemarle to promote their views." Setting aside his infidelities, Buckingham is said to have been a civil and obliging husband.

De Grammont styles the Duchess of Buckingham a "short, fat body," a description borne out by the account of the old Lady de Longueville, who lived to be near a hundred years old, and who had seen her in her youth. Bishop Percy says in his MS. notes to Langbaine: "The Viscountess de Longueville described her as a little round crumpled woman, very fond of finery. She remembered paying her a visit when the duch-

ess was in mourning, at which time she found her lying on a sofa, with a kind of loose robe over her, all edged or laced with gold."

The duchess died in November, 1705, at the age of sixty-six, and was buried in the vault of the Villiers family, in Henry the Seventh's Chapel at Westminster. She left her personal property to a kinswoman, one of the five sisters of the Earl of Plymouth.

CHAPTER X.

BARBARA VILLIERS, DUCHESS OF CLEVELAND.

Lineage of This Lady — Her Marriage — Joins the Exiled Court with Her Husband — Made a Lady of the Bedchamber — Her Intrigue with Lord Chesterfield — Her Husband Is Raised to the Peerage — Their Disagreements and Final Separation — Notice of Her Weak Husband — Person of the Duchess — Her Extravagance, and Addiction to Play — Her Imperiousness, and Influence over the King — Anecdotes — Her Insolence to Lord Clarendon — Her Quarrel with Charles — De Grammont Mediates between Them — Her Intrigue with Henry Jermyn — With Hart, the Actor — With Goodman, the Actor — With Jacob Hall, the Rope-dancer — With William Wycherley, the Poet — Notices and Anecdotes of These Persons — The Duchess Retires to France — Her Intrigues in the French Capital — Charles Remonstrates with Her on Her Gallantries — Her Marriage with Beau Fielding — His Harsh Treatment of Her — Her Death.

THE story of this imperious beauty, though not without its moral, embraces a melancholy recital of infamy and vice. She was the sole daughter of William, second Viscount Grandison, who died at Oxford, in 1643, at the age of thirty, of wounds received at the siege of Bristol. Lord Clarendon, who dwells on the character of this nobleman with evident pleasure, describes him as faultless in person, romantic in valour, and uncorrupted in morals.

He was buried at Christ Church, where, after the Restoration, his too celebrated daughter erected — out of the wages of her shame — a sumptuous monument to his memory. It was a strange tribute from a shameless child to the virtuous and high-minded dead.

In 1658, at the age of eighteen, Barbara Villiers became the wife of Roger Palmer, Esq., a student of one of the Inns of Court, and heir to a large fortune. He figures through a long life as an author, a bigot, and a very mean man. The following year they joined the court of Charles in the Low Countries, where the husband made himself acceptable by his loans, and the lady by her charms. Previous, however, to her becoming the wife of Palmer, Lord Chesterfield is said to have been her successful admirer, and, indeed, was generally considered to be the father of Lady Sussex, her eldest child. Charles was afterward jealous of this previous attachment, which, says De Grammont, “as neither of them denied it, was the more generally believed.” At the Restoration she hastened to England, where, at the age of twenty, she found its sovereign her slave, and her beauty admitted to be the most faultless in the kingdom. The king quitted the general rejoicings, to pass in her society the first evening of his return.

The arrival of a young queen, which might have been expected to weaken the influence of

the duchess over her royal lover, appears, on the contrary, to have given it additional force. Charles, compelled to take part either with his wife or his mistress, unfortunately preferred her who possessed superior charms, and thus the king and his beautiful concubine were driven to form a closer compact than before.

The manner in which this abandoned woman was forced into the queen's household has been related elsewhere. To effect this scandalous measure, or rather to confer on the royal mistress so considerable a post as that of a lady of the bedchamber, it was necessary that her husband should be raised to the peerage. Accordingly, after a brief interval of real or affected hesitation, he condescended to reap the reward of his own shame, and, in 1662, accepted the title of Earl of Castlemaine, in Ireland. Hitherto the weak husband, whether from indifference to public opinion, or from some remaining feelings of attachment for the wife of his choice, had continued to linger in the scene of his disgrace and in the society of those who were only too well acquainted with his domestic affairs. One of his cold and casual encounters with his beautiful wife is thus graphically described by Pepys: "That," he says, speaking of one of his visits to the court, "which pleased me best, was my Lady Castlemaine standing over against us upon a piece of Whitehall. But methought it was strange to see her lord and

her upon the same place, walking up and down without taking notice of one another: only, at first entry, he put off his hat, and she made him a very civil salute, but afterward took no notice one of another; but both of them now and then would take their child, which the nurse held in her arms, and dandle it."

But a misunderstanding shortly afterward took place, which effected their entire estrangement. Singularly enough, the final separation between the weak lord and his worthless wife was caused, not by any feelings of enraged jealousy on the part of the former, but by a difference on religious subjects! The earl, who was a Roman Catholic, had insisted that one of his children, or rather one of his wife's, should be baptised in the communion of that faith, to which Lady Castlemaine had originally consented. Some days afterward, however, she audaciously announced the child to be the king's son, and expressed her intention of having it christened by a Protestant clergyman. Lord Castlemaine was naturally indignant. In spite, however, of his remonstrances, the infant was baptised according to the rites of the Protestant Church, Charles the Second, the Earl of Oxford, and the Countess of Suffolk standing sponsors for it at the font. The earl flew enraged to the Continent, Lady Castlemaine having anticipated him by carrying off all his money and jewels which she could collect together, with which she re-

moved to her brother's house at Richmond, where she could be nearer to Hampton Court and to the king. Within a short time she was domesticated in apartments at Whitehall.

We will dismiss the unfortunate husband in a few words. During the raging of the Popish Plot, he was accused by Titus Oates of having conspired against the life of the king. According to this infamous witness, it was jealousy which led him to contemplate the crime, although the whole tenor of his conduct and character renders the circumstance improbable. Nevertheless, he was a bigoted Catholic, and, although acquitted at his trial, the charge of his having been implicated in a treasonable transaction would appear to be not altogether unfounded. Probably he owed his escape to his wife's discreditable connection with the court. Many there were who perished on the scaffold during that extraordinary period of excitement, against whom the evidence was less presumptive. On the accession of James, Lord Castlemaine was sent ambassador to the Papal Court. His instructions were "to reconcile the kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland to the Holy See, from which, for more than an age, they had fallen off by heresy." Walpole says "that the Pope received him with as little ceremony as his wife had done." Sanguine as James and his ambassador may have been, his Holiness appears to have been fully alive, not only to the folly, but to the actual danger of

the attempt. Castlemaine made himself sufficiently ridiculous, and accordingly his zeal was laughed at even in the hotbed of Catholicism. Whenever his lordship referred to the object of his mission, Pope Innocent was invariably seized with such a fit of coughing that he was compelled to retire. Castlemaine, perceiving at last that he was only laughed at, sent a message to the Pope threatening to take his instant departure. "Only recommend him," was the Pope's reply, "to rise early, that he may rest at noon: it is dangerous in this country to travel in the heat of the day." The earl, while at Rome, was splendidly entertained by the Jesuits, with whom his Holiness was on bad terms. After the Revolution he lived in retirement in Wales, in which principality he died in July, 1705.

In the portrait of Lady Castlemaine, in the celebrated gallery of beauties at Hampton Court, the canvas is the mirror of her mind. It describes her as she really was, bold, dazzling, and scornful. She is habited in the garb of Pallas, a comparison nearly as misplaced as Dryden's resemblance of her to Cato, or the delineation of her as a Madonna at Dalkeith. She once sat, it is said, for a picture of the Virgin, intended for a nunnery in France; but the blasphemy, we are told, was discovered by the holy sisters, and the portrait indignantly returned.

Pepys's admiration for Lady Castlemaine, and his constant and glowing tributes to her surpassing



Barbara, Duchess of Cleveland.

Photo-etching after the painting by Sir Peter Lely.



beauty, very nearly approach the ludicrous. Her charms appear to have been dwelt upon even by his own fireside; so much so as to have excited the jealousy of Mrs. Pepys. Even the petticoats of the favourite, trimmed with lace, “it did him good,” he says, “to look upon.” Her figure must have been rather on a large scale. Pepys mentions her weighing with the king, when it was ascertained that she was heavier than her lover; she was, however, with child at the time. Sir John Reresby speaks of her with enthusiasm, as “the first woman of her age.”

Of the vast sums which were lavished on the proud beauty, and which so long supported her in extravagant splendour at an impoverished court, the following extract from a contemporary letter will enable us to form some conception. “They have signed and sealed,” says the writer, “ten thousand pounds a year more to the Duchess of Cleveland; who has likewise near ten thousand pounds a year more out of the new farm of the county excise of beer and ale; five thousand pounds a year out of the post-office; and, they say, the reversion of all the king’s leases, the reversion of all places in the custom-house, the Green Wax, and, indeed, what not! All promotions, spiritual and temporal, pass under her cognisance.” On one occasion, we find the king conferring on her all the rich Christmas presents which he had received from his courtiers and the nobility, and at another time

paying her debts to the amount of thirty thousand pounds. She had even the effrontery to petition for the Phœnix Park in Dublin; but it was at length found necessary to set some bounds to her rapacity, and the request was refused. She usually appeared at court with more jewels than were worn by the queen and the Duchess of York together.

Her immense fortune was squandered principally at the gaming-table. Pepys says, in 1668: “I was told to-night that my Lady Castlemaine is so great a gamester as to have won fifteen thousand pounds in one night, and lost twenty-five thousand in another night at play, and hath played a thousand pounds and fifteen hundred at a cast.” The game was probably basset.

Lady Castlemaine maintained her dangerous influence over Charles for nearly ten years, and, even at the expiration of that period, it was her own folly and misconduct, rather than satiety on the part of Charles, which led to her disgrace. The king loved quiet; above all things he dreaded domestic broils, and seemed alone to relish that easy and sauntering mode of living of which freedom from care and restraint constitute the principal charm. On her part, she was perpetually teasing him with petty jealousies or alarming him with tempests of rage. The king's recent connection with Nell Gwynn and Mary Davis, while it plainly discovered his increasing indifference to his

early mistress, in the same degree inflamed her jealousy and alarm. But it was from the time that Frances Stewart appeared at court that her influence more perceptibly declined.

“The Duchess of Cleveland,” says Burnet, “was a woman of great beauty, but most enormously vicious and ravenous, foolish but imperious, very uneasy to the king, and always carrying on intrigues with other men, while yet she pretended she was jealous of him. His passion for her, and her strange behaviour toward him, did so disorder him that often he was not master of himself nor capable of minding business which, in so critical a time, required great application.” But, as regards the tenure by which the lady governed her lover, the king’s subsequent relapse from tenderness to indifference, her daily exhibitions of menaces and tears, of these the pages of Pepys afford the most lively picture. The following agreeable notices are scattered through his Diary :

“January, 1662-3.—Mrs. Sarah tells us how the king sups at least four times every week with my Lady Castlemaine; and most often stays till the morning with her, and goes home through the garden all alone privately, and that so as the very sentries take notice of it and speak of it. She tells me that, about a month ago, she quickened at my Lord Gerard’s at dinner, and cried out that she was undone; and all the lords and men were fain to quit the room, and women called to help her.”

“April 8, 1663.—After dinner to the Hyde Park; at the park was the king, and in another coach my Lady Castlemaine, they greeting one another at every turn.”

“April 25, 1663.—I did hear that the queen is much grieved of late at the king’s neglecting her, he having not supped once with her this quarter of a year, and almost every night with my Lady Castlemaine, who hath been with him this St. George’s feast at Windsor, and come home with him last night; and which is more, they say is removed as to her bed from her own home to a chamber in Whitehall, next to the king’s own.”

“July 29, 1667.—I was surprised at seeing Lady Castlemaine at Whitehall, having but newly heard the stories of the king and her being parted for ever. So I took Mr. Povy, who was there, aside, and he told me all,—how imperious this woman is, and hectors the king to whatever she will. It seems she is with child, and the king says he did not get it: with that she made a slighting pugh with her mouth, and went out of the house, and never came in again till the king went to Sir Daniel Harvey’s to pray her; and so she is come to-day, when one would think his mind would be full of some other cares, having but this morning broken up such a Parliament with so much discontent and so many wants upon him, and but yesterday heard such a sermon against adultery. But it

seems she hath told the king that, whoever did get it, he should own it. And the bottom of the quarrel is this: She is fallen in love with young Jermyn, who hath of late been with her oftener than the king, and is now going to marry my Lady Falmouth: the king is mad at her entertaining Jermyn, and she is mad at Jermyn's going to marry from her, so they are all mad; and thus the kingdom is governed!"

"August 7, 1667.—Though the king and my Lady Castlemaine are friends again, she is not at Whitehall, but at Sir Daniel Harvey's, whither the king goes to her; and he says she made him ask her forgiveness upon his knees, and promise to offend her no more so; and that, indeed, she did threaten to bring all his bastards to his closet door, and hath nearly hectored him out of his wit."

"January 16, 1668-9.—Povy tells me that my Lady Castlemaine is now in a higher command over the king than ever,—not as a mistress, for she scorns him, but as a tyrant to command him."

From her violent temper and mischievous intrigues, Charles was not the only sufferer. The solemn Clarendon, the dignified Ormond, and the virtuous Southampton were alike objects of her ridicule and malevolence. Clarendon was her avowed enemy. He forbade his wife to visit her, and allowed no instrument to pass the great seal in which her name was inserted. Afterward, when he had been deprived of his office, and was

returning from the king's presence a disgraced man, the duchess, being told he was approaching, hastened to her window at Whitehall to insult him. "Madam," was his only reply, "if you live *you will grow old.*" Lord Southampton, as long as he was in office, positively refused to admit her name on the treasury books.

From the year 1668, though occasionally a visitor at court, she ceased to have apartments at Whitehall. The means by which Charles eventually extricated himself from her toils is not altogether clear. Lord Dartmouth mentions his relation, William Legge, by desire of Charles, singing an insulting ballad in her presence, commencing,

"Poor Allinda's growing old,
Those charms are now no more," etc.,

which, he says, she understood to be applied to herself. However, her notorious infidelities afforded Charles the best excuse for a separation. If she were as beautiful as a Helen, she had as many lovers as a Messalina. Her attachment for Henry Jermyn had already rendered the king sufficiently contemptible. "Though his passion for her," says De Grammont, "was now greatly diminished, yet he did not think it consistent with his dignity that a mistress, whom he had honoured with public distinction, and who still received a considerable support from him, should

appear chained to the car of the most ridiculous conqueror that ever existed. His Majesty had frequently expostulated with the countess upon this subject; but his expostulations were never attended to. It was in the last of these differences that he advised her rather to bestow her favours upon Jacob Hall, the rope-dancer, who was able to return them, than lavish her money upon Jermyn for nothing, as it would be more honourable for her to pass for the mistress of the one than the very humble servant of the other. She was not proof against this railing, and the impetuosity of her temper broke forth like lightning. She told him that it very ill became him to throw out such reproaches against one who, of all the women in England, deserved them the least; that he had never ceased quarrelling thus unjustly with her, ever since he had betrayed his own mean and low inclinations; that to gratify such a depraved taste as his, he wanted only such silly things as Stewart, Wells, and that pitiful, strolling actress, whom he had lately introduced into their society. Floods of tears, from rage, generally accompanied these storms." The affair ended by De Grammont being called in as mediator. The differences on both sides were circumstantially detailed to him, and the count drew up articles of agreement. It was stipulated, on the part of the king, that the lady should for ever abandon Jermyn; that she should consent to his

banishment from court, and that she should cease to storm against her rivals, Miss Stewart and Miss Wells. Charles, in consideration of these concessions, consented to create her a duchess, and to increase her pension. Accordingly, on the 3d of August, 1670, about a year after their reconciliation, she was created Duchess of Cleveland.

Had the frailty of this licentious woman proceeded no further than her intimacy with Charles; had she originally been captivated by his arts, and by the sight of a young and agreeable monarch a suppliant at her feet, there might be some palliation for her conduct. But pride itself was made subservient to her unruly passions; gratitude and self-interest were forgotten, and we find Hart and Goodman, the actors, and even Jacob Hall, the rope-dancer, sharing her favours with the king. Respecting these persons it may be interesting to say a few words.

Hart, who had been a captain in the army during the civil wars, had attached himself to the king's company, and proved the best actor of his time. The part for which he was most celebrated was "Othello." His intrigue with the royal mistress is alluded to by Pepys. "7th April, 1668, Mrs. Knipp¹ tells me that my Lady Castlemaine is mightily in love with Hart of their house; and

¹ A married actress belonging to the king's company. The last trace of her occurs in 1677, when she acted in "The Wily False One."

he is much with her in private, and she goes to him and do give him many presents ; and that the thing is most certain, and Beck Marshall only privy to it, and the means of bringing them together : which is a very odd thing, and by this means she is even with the king's love to Mrs. Davis." Hart quitted the stage in 1684, on the union of the king's company with that of the Duke of York.

Goodman was a younger man than Hart, and succeeded him in some of his characters. Colley Cibber mentions his having quitted the stage in 1690, when he himself appeared as the chaplain in Otway's "Orphan." Oldmixon relates a curious incident connected with Goodman's intrigue with the Duchess of Cleveland. "This woman," he says, "was so infamous in her amours that she made no scruple of owning her lovers, among whom was Goodman the player, who so narrowly escaped the gallows some years after ; and the fellow was so insolent upon it, that one night, when the queen was at the theatre, and the curtain, as usual, was immediately ordered to be drawn up, Goodman cried, 'Is my duchess come ?' and being answered no, he swore terribly the curtain should not be drawn till the duchess came, which was at the instant, and saved the affront to the queen."

Of Jacob Hall little need be said. He was remarkable for his professional agility, his hand-

some face, and the strength and elegance of his frame. The duchess took him into favour and settled on him a pension. "Their intimacy," says De Grammont, "was celebrated in many a song, but she despised all these rumours and only appeared more handsome than before."

Churchill, afterward the great Duke of Marlborough, and the handsomest man in the court, was also a favoured lover. "The duchess," says De Grammont, "who neither recommended to him circumspection in his behaviour nor in his conversation, did not seem to be in the least concerned at his indiscretion. Thus this intrigue had become a general topic in all companies, and occasioned a great variety of speculations and reasonings when the court arrived in London. Some said she had already presented him Jermyn's pension and Jacob Hall's salary, because the merits and qualifications of both were united in his person." The Duke of Buckingham at last opened the king's eyes on the subject, and contrived that he himself should be a witness to his mistress's infidelity. Churchill escaped by leaping out of a window, but it did not prevent his being banished the court.

The last person whom the duchess honoured with her favours, previous to her separation from Charles, was William Wycherley, the gay and handsome poet. Their coaches were one day passing each other in Pall Mall, when, to his aston-

ishment, the duchess thrust her head out of the carriage window and exclaimed, "You, Wycherley, you are a son of a ——." The poet was at first somewhat confused, but remembering the following stanza, in a song introduced into his "Love in a Wood,"

"Where parents are slaves,
Their brats cannot be any other;
Great wits and great braves
Have always a punk for their mother,"

he considered it as a compliment to his wit, and immediately drove after her carriage into the park. Buckingham threatened to inform the king of their intimacy. Shortly afterward, however, meeting Wycherley at the house of a friend, the duke was so charmed with his conversation that he admitted him to his friendship, and assisted in making his fortune.

About the year 1670 the Duchess of Cleveland retired to France, in which country, with the exception of an occasional visit to England, she resided during the remainder of her life. At Paris, though her beauty latterly survived but in reputation, she was not without lovers. The Chevalier de Chatillon, a French gentleman, and Ralph Montagu, the English ambassador, afterward the first duke of that name, were among her admirers. Burnet speaks of Montagu as "bewitched" with the discarded mistress; and her intrigue with

Chatillon was so notorious that Charles wrote to remonstrate with her on the subject. Either a feeling of jealousy still lurked in his mind, or he was unwilling to become a laughing-stock to the French court. In a letter from the duchess to her old lover, dated Paris, Tuesday the 28th, 1678, — alluding to a letter she had written to her French gallant, and which Charles either had, or was likely to obtain possession of, — she thus writes : “ The letter he [Sir Harry Tichborn] has, and I doubt not he has or will send it to you. Now all I have to say for myself is, that you know, as to love, one is no mistress of oneself, and that you ought not to be offended at me, since all things of this nature is at an end with you and I, so that I could do you no prejudice.” And she adds in the same letter, “ I promise you, that for my conduct it shall be such as that you nor nobody shall have occasion to blame me. And I hope you will be just to what you said to me, which was at my house when you told me you had letters of mine. You said, ‘ Madam, all that I ask of you for your own sake is, live so for the future as to make the least noise you can, and I care not who you love.’ ”

On the 25th of November, 1705, in her sixty-sixth year, the duchess was weak enough to unite herself to Robert Fielding, better known as Beau Fielding, a man of broken fortunes and indifferent character, but as handsome as any of her early lovers. His conduct to her after marriage was so

brutal that she was compelled to claim the protection of the law. Fortunately for her, it was discovered that he was the husband of another. This person was one Mary Wadsworth, who had assumed the name and character of a Mrs. Deleau, an heiress of the period, and who had thus deceived Fielding into marrying her. He was prosecuted and found guilty of bigamy, but was afterward pardoned. The particulars, which are extremely curious, will be found at length in the State Trials. Fielding is the hero of Steele's papers in "The Tatler," Nos. 50 and 51, entitled the "History of Orlando the Fair."

The duchess died at her house at Chiswick, of a dropsy, on the 9th October, 1709. She has been commended as having been the patron of Dryden, but had Flecknoe, Shadwell, or any other of his less gifted contemporaries been the fashion of the day, they were, perhaps, just as likely to have been distinguished by her indiscriminate favours. She was a convert to the Roman Catholic religion, but at what period, and under what circumstances, is equally unimportant and obscure.

CHAPTER XI.

LOUISE DE QUÉROUALLE, DUCHESS OF PORTSMOUTH.

Accompanies the Duchess of Orleans to England — Charles Is Fascinated by Her Beauty — Lineage of This Lady — Her Connection with the Political Intrigues of the Period — Her Baneful Influence over the King — Honours Conferred upon Her — Her Avarice — Her Splendid Apartments at Whitehall — Description of Her Person — Lampoons of the Period — The Duchess Supposed to Be Married to Charles — She Is Avoided by the Ancient Nobility — Intrigues with Lord Danby and the Prior of Vendôme — Her Distress at the Death of Charles — She Retires to France — Her Old Age and Death.

At the period when it was the policy of Louis the Fourteenth to detach the court of England from the Triple League, he is well known to have selected the charming Duchess of Orleans, the favourite sister of Charles, to persuade him to accede to that disgraceful measure. To any other monarch he would have despatched a Sully or a Richelieu. To Charles he sent a brilliant embassy of gay men and beautiful women, accompanied by the trappings of pleasure and the promise of gold. “Louis,” says Hume, “in order to fix him in the

French interests, resolved to bind him by the ties of pleasure, the only ones which with him were irresistible ; and he made him a present of a French mistress, by whose means he hoped for the future to govern him." We need scarcely add that Mlle. de Quéroualle was the person alluded to by Hume. She was about five and twenty when, in 1670, she appeared in the train of the Duchess of Orleans at the English court. Her manners were ingratiating, her wit agreeable, and her face beautiful. Charles was fascinated by her accomplishments, and, as Buckingham and the enemies of the Duchess of Cleveland assisted with their intrigues, it was not long before she became the professed mistress of the easy monarch. The peerages style her the Lady Louise Renée de Penencovet de Quéroualle. This long list of names was before long familiarly abbreviated by the English into the single and familiar one of "Carwell." Little is known of her origin and early history, but that she was descended from a noble family in Lower Brittany, and that she had been taken from a convent to be maid of honour to the Duchess of Orleans. Her arrival in England was celebrated both by Dryden and St. Evremond,— by the former in dull, and by the latter in indecent verse.

Charles, without scruple, appointed his new mistress a maid of honour to his queen, and eventually a lady of the bedchamber. From the

period of her being domesticated at Whitehall, we find her a spy on the actions of Charles ; a mischievous meddler in the English court ; a promoter of French interests, and the cause of English debasement. There is no dishonest transaction — no profligate political intrigue — which disgraced the last years of this unhappy reign, in which she does not appear as a principal mover. The king's acceptance of a pension from France, his disgraceful engagements with that country, his crusade against parliaments, and the treachery of England toward the Dutch were alike hatched in her closet and fostered under her influence. Thus could a trifler and a beauty sway the destinies of Europe. With a head teeming with politics, and a heart with the love of pleasure, the intriguing Frenchwoman was as much detested by the nation as she was beloved by the king. Charles continued more constant to her than to any of his other mistresses ; indeed, she duped and enchanted him to the end. According to Andrew Marvell, who thus deprecates her influence, —

“ That Carwell, that incestuous punk,
Made our most sacred Sovereign drunk ;
And drunk she let him give the buss,
That still the kingdom's bound to curse.”

On the 19th of August, 1673, the king suddenly raised her to the highest honours in the land. He

created her, by letters patent, Baroness of Petersfield, Countess of Farnham, and Duchess of Portsmouth, while the French king showed his gratitude by conferring on her the Duchy of Aubigny in France. Two years afterward, in 1675, her young son by Charles was created Duke of Richmond and Lennox.

To these honours were added pensions and profits sufficient to beggar a far wealthier court than that of Charles. In a pasquinade, printed in 1680, entitled "Articles of High Treason against the Duchess of Portsmouth," among other grave charges, she is accused of having introduced a general corruption, and of having profited by the sale of every place of trust and emolument in the gift of the court. It is even said that when Lord Ossory was sent by Charles to Madrid, in order to present his niece, the young Queen of Spain, with jewels valued at fifteen thousand pounds, the duchess caused Lord Ossory's services to be dispensed with, and prevailed on her lover to bestow the jewels on herself. In the notes to "Howell's State Trials," she is stated to have refused a hundred thousand pounds to procure the pardon of the celebrated Lord Russell. As no authority, however, is produced, and as the rejection of so splendid a bribe is opposed to all our preconceived notions of her character, the story may reasonably be doubted.

According to Evelyn, the apartments of the

Duchess of Portsmouth at Whitehall had ten times the “richness and glory” of the queen’s. An account of a morning visit which he paid to them in 1683, in company with the king, is amusingly detailed in his diary. “Following his Majesty,” he says, “through the gallery, I went, with the few who attended him, into the Duchess of Portsmouth’s dressing-room within her bedchamber, where she was in her morning loose garment, her maids combing, newly out of her bed, his Majesty and the gallants standing about her. But that which engaged my curiosity was the rich and splendid furniture of this woman’s apartment, now twice or thrice pulled down and rebuilt to satisfy her prodigal and expensive pleasures, while her Majesty’s does not exceed some gentlemen’s wives in furniture and accommodation. Here I saw the new fabric of French tapestry, for design, tenderness of work, and incomparable imitation of the best paintings, beyond anything I had ever beheld. Some pieces had Versailles, St. Germains, and other palaces of the French king, with hunttings, figures, and landscapes, exotic fowls, and all to the life, rarely done. Then for Japan cabinets, screens, pendule clocks, great vases of wrought plate, tables, stands, chimney furniture, sconces, branches, braseras, etc., all of massive silver and out of number, besides some of his Majesty’s best paintings. Surfeiting of this, I dined at Sir Stephen Fox’s, and went contented home to my poor but quiet

villa. What contentment can there be in the riches and splendour of this world, purchased with vice and dishonour?" These splendid apartments, which had been three times rebuilt for a whim, were eventually destroyed by fire in 1691.

The countenance of the Duchess of Portsmouth, though undoubtedly beautiful, possessed the worst of all faults, a want of expression. Evelyn says, in his opinion, she had a "simple baby face," and in a poem of the time we find :

"That baby face of thine, and those black eyes,
Methinks should ne'er a hero's love surprise;
None, that had eyes, e'er saw in that French face
O'ermuch of beauty, form, or comely grace."

Another contemporary, Reresby, speaks of her merely as "a very fine woman."

Horace Walpole mentions a portrait of the Duchess of Portsmouth, which, he says, was once in the royal collection, in which, in the character of Iphigenia, and Charles in that of Cymon, they are made to illustrate the beautiful lines in Dryden's poem :

"Where, in a plain defended by a wood,
Crept through the matted grass a crystal flood,
By which an alabaster fountain stood:
And on the margin of the fount was laid,
Attended by her slaves, a sleeping maid."

Another picture of her by Sir Peter Lely, in which the royal mistress and her infant son, the

Duke of Richmond, are represented as the Madonna and Child, was painted for a convent of nuns in France. Is it possible that indecorum or blasphemy could proceed to greater lengths?

The beauty, however, which captivated Charles, appears occasionally to have been called in question by his less gallant subjects. In 1682 the following lines are said to have been written under her portrait ; but it must be remembered that she had now passed the meridian of beauty.

“ Who can on this picture look,
And not straight be wonder-struck,
That such a sneaking dowdy thing
Should make a beggar of a king !
Three happy nations turn to tears,
And all their former love to fears.
Ruin the great, and raise the small,
Yet will by turns betray them all.
Lowly born, and meanly bred,
Yet of this nation is the head :
For half Whitehall make her their court,
Though th’ other half make her their sport.
Monmouth’s tamer, Jeffrey’s advance,
Foe to England, spy to France ;
False and foolish, proud and bold,
Ugly, as you see, and old.”

In a little work published shortly after the death of Charles, purported to be a secret history of his reign, it is asserting that the duchess was actually married to her royal lover by the Common Prayer-book, according to the ceremonies of the Church

Louise de Querouaille, Duchess of Portsmouth.

Photo-etching after the painting by Sir Peter Lely.



of England. As Queen Catherine was still alive, this act of folly and wickedness could only have been perpetrated in order to satisfy some inconvenient scruples of Madame de Quéroualle's conscience. In a pasquinade already referred to, we find the twentieth Article of High Treason inserted as follows: "That she has, by her creatures and friends, given out and whispered abroad, that she was married to his Majesty, and that her son, the Duke of Richmond, is his Majesty's legitimate son, and, consequently, Prince of Wales, his health being frequently drunk by her and her creatures in her night debauches and merry meetings, to the great dishonour and reflection of his Majesty, and the manifest peril and danger of these kingdoms." Certain it is that, in order to gain her over to his interests, the unprincipled Shaftesbury flattered her with hopes of her son succeeding to the throne.

Supposing that this silly marriage really took place, it signally failed in procuring for her the countenance of such of the old nobility as stood aloof from the vices and frivolities of the court of Charles, — an object, singular as it may appear, which she seems to have had deeply at heart. She once sent a message to the high-principled Duchess of Ormond, that she would dine with her on a particular day. The duchess made no objection to receive her, but sent her two granddaughters out of the house. When they sat down to table, the only other guest was the family chaplain.



From the fate of the Duchess of Cleveland she seems to have learned wisdom. Instead of endeavouring to storm her easy lover into compliance with her extravagant whims and fancies, as did her imperious predecessor, she enslaved him by the usual arts of her sex, and, by means of tears, jealousies, affectations of sickness, and graceful exhibitions of caprice, wound herself securely around his heart. The kind feeling which Charles ever bore toward the merry and warm-hearted Nell Gwynn appears to have occasionally caused her uneasiness. But, with this exception, she had little reason to complain. Her influence over the heart and the politics of the king continued unshaken to the last, and as she was the longest, so she was the latest passion of Charles. As she had attained the age of forty at the time of his death, she must have been gifted with other powers of pleasing besides mere beauty. Burnet mentions her having been afflicted with some uneasy feelings, on its being intimated to her that Louis the Fourteenth had sent away his mistress, Madame de Montespan, on account of religious scruples, and that the repentant monarch had afterward solemnly taken the sacrament. Charles, however, was unlikely to sacrifice his pleasures to his principles, and it must have been a stretch of imagination to have imagined him a devotee.

Though apparently attached for his own sake to the person of Charles, her affection for him seems

to have been no bar to her conferring her favours on others. Lord Danby, who possessed considerable advantages of person and fortune, as well as the gallant and handsome Grand Prior of Vendôme,—the soldier, the statesman, and the priest,—were believed to have shared her favours with the king. Unlike the Duchess of Cleveland, she was particularly circumspect in the manner in which she carried on her amours, and consequently Charles seems to have been kept in happy ignorance of her infidelities. Unlike her predecessor in another respect, she was respectful in her manner to the queen, with whom her appointment as lady of the bedchamber constantly brought her in contact.

When Charles was suddenly attacked by his last illness at Whitehall, the duchess hung over her senseless paramour in an agony of despair. There were those, however, not far off,—the queen and the Duchess of York,—who had more legitimate claims to watch by the dying monarch, and accordingly the royal concubine was compelled to retire to the solitude of those gorgeous apartments which she was destined so soon to quit for ever. It was in those moments of suspense and misery that she received a welcome visit from M. Barillon. “I went,” he writes to Louis the Fourteenth, “to the apartments of the Duchess of Portsmouth. I found her overwhelmed with grief, the physicians having deprived her of all hope.”

The duchess is far from having been a solitary exception of a beautiful woman leading a life of sin and pleasure, and yet at the same time taking a deep interest in the precarious state of her own soul and the spiritual welfare of her lover. She had, probably, on more than one occasion, conversed on religious subjects with her dying paramour, since in her heart was locked the dangerous secret that Charles had long since clandestinely embraced the faith of Rome. Accordingly, when Barillon visited her, he found her deeply affected by the perilous state of the soul of the departing monarch, and in the greatest despair lest he should die without having partaken of the last sacrament. "I have a thing," she said, "of great moment to tell you. If it were known my head would be in danger. The king is really and truly a Catholic; but he will die without being reconciled to the Church. His bedchamber is full of Protestant clergymen. I cannot enter it without giving scandal. The duke is thinking only of himself. Speak to him. Remember that there is a soul at stake. He is master now. He can clear the room. Go this instant, or it will be too late." The result of Barillon's spiritual mission we have related elsewhere.

Charles, in his last moments, spoke with great affection of his foreign mistress; nor is there reason to doubt that she shed many bitter tears at his death. The new monarch, in gratitude probably

for the zeal which she had shown for the spiritual welfare of his brother, which he had himself lost sight of in watching over his own selfish interests, paid her a visit of condolence after their mutual bereavement, and probably rendered her fall easier than it would otherwise have been.

Having no longer any tie to bind her to England, she retired, with what money and jewels she had amassed, to her native country. Unfortunately, the taste she had acquired for splendour, and a fatal addiction to play, proved so destructive to her fortunes that at the close of life she was compelled to subsist on a small pension which she received from the French government. Voltaire, who saw her at the age of seventy, mentions, in his "Siècle de Louis XIV.," that years had but little impaired her beauty, and that her face was still lovely and her person commanding. Lady Sunderland speaks of her, in 1690, as "scandalous and poor." Some years afterward, also, we find her mentioned in the memoirs of the Duc de Saint Simon, as very old, very penitent, and very poor, — "*fort vieille, très convertie et pénitente, et très mal dans ses affaires.*"

The duchess after the death of Charles paid at least two visits to England, once in 1699, and again in 1715, when she was presented to Queen Caroline, then Princess of Wales. On the latter occasion she is said to have had the effrontery to apply for a pension to George the First. She

was certainly a devotee in her old age. Her death took place at Aubigny in France, in November, 1734, having survived her royal lover nearly fifty years. George Selwyn, who saw her in the year 1733, assured Sir Nathaniel Wraxall that she was even then "possessed of many attractions, though verging toward fourscore."

It may be incidentally mentioned that Lee inscribed to her his two plays of "Sophonisba" and "Gloriana." In his fulsome dedication to the latter play, "I pay," he says, "my adorations to your Grace, who are the most beautiful, as well in the bright appearances of body, as in the immortal splendours of an elevated soul."

The duchess had a sister, Henriette de Quéroualle, who married Philip, seventh Earl of Pembroke. He treated her brutally, but she had the good fortune to survive him. This lady, who afterward married the Marquis of Troy, died in old age at Paris, on the 1st November, 1728. Her only daughter, Lady Charlotte Herbert, became the wife of John, Lord Jeffries, the only son of the merciless judge.

CHAPTER XII.

HORTENSIA MANCINI, DUCHESS OF MAZARIN.

Character of the Duchess — Her Lineage — Anecdotes Connected with Her Early History — Her Marriage with the Duke de Meilleraye — Her Extraordinary Conduct — The Duchess Institutes a Suit for a Separation — Her Wild Frolics — She Flies from Paris in Male Attire — Her Subsequent Adventures — Arrives in England and Becomes the Mistress of Charles II. — St. Évremond's Admiration of Her Person and Talents — Charming Society of Her House at Chelsea — Rochester Lampoons Her — Her Poverty — Her Death Supposed to Have Been Hastened by Drinking Strong Spirits — Her Body Is Seized by Her Creditors — St. Évremond's Characteristic Lament.

THE Duchess of Mazarin was unquestionably the most remarkable woman who languished in the seraglio of Charles. In her youth she was considered the most beautiful woman and the wealthiest heiress in Europe. During the king's early days of poverty and exile, when the almost infant niece of the powerful Mazarin was courted by the most illustrious families in Europe for their sons, Charles had been an eager suitor for her hand. The offer, however, was rejected by the haughty cardinal. The fact is singular that she should

have afterward become the mistress of her admirer, and indebted to his bounty for the ordinary luxuries, if not the necessaries, of life.

The character of this beautiful woman was scarcely less eccentric than her accomplishments were brilliant. Reckless, impetuous, and devoid of principle, she sacrificed her splendid fortunes to the whim of the moment and to the gratification of her ungovernable passions. Hazardous adventures and indelicate frolics were preferred to the advantages of fair fame and substantial grandeur. With all her wit, she became the scorn of fools; and finally, having exhausted wealth that had once appeared boundless, she died impoverished and in exile, bequeathing to her family and to posterity nothing but a melancholy moral and a tarnished name.

Hortensia Mancini was the daughter of Lorenzo Mancini, a nobleman of Rome, by Jeronima Mazarin, sister of the celebrated cardinal. She was born in 1647, and at the age of six years was sent into France to be educated. Her vivacity and love of frolic appear to have been early conspicuous. When a girl, she used to amuse herself by throwing handfuls of gold out of the windows of the Mazarin palace in the French capital, for the mere pleasure of seeing the scrambles among the mob.

It would seem that she early discovered a dis-taste for her religious duties, a circumstance par-

ticularly displeasing to the cardinal. He once said to her, "If you will not attend mass for the sake of God, at least do it out of fear of the world." The girlhood of the volatile beauty was vigilantly watched, and, from her own memoirs, we glean that the precaution was not unnecessary. "We lived at Lyons," she says, "in a room which looked into the market-place, the windows of which were low enough for any one to get in. Madame de Venelle, our governess, was so accustomed to her trade of watching us that she rose even in her sleep to see what we were about. One night, as my sister lay asleep with her mouth open, Madame de Venelle, according to custom, coming to grope in the dark, happened to thrust her finger into her mouth. My sister, starting up, nearly made her teeth meet in surprise. You may judge of the amazement of both, when they found themselves awake and in this posture. The next day the story was told to the king, and afforded the court some amusement." The sister here alluded to was Mary, afterward married to Lorenzo Colonna, constable of the Kingdom of Naples. She was the first passion of Louis the Fourteenth, and it was only the strong measures adopted by Cardinal Mazarin, who dreaded the vengeance of the princes of the blood, that prevented the young king from making her his wife.

At the age of thirteen, Hortensia Mancini was married to Armand Charles de la Porte, Duke de

Meilleraye and Mayenne, and a peer of France. Her uncle had intended this nobleman for his niece Mary, but Meilleraye disappointed him by falling in love with her more beautiful sister. "If he did not marry her," he said, "he was sure he should die in three months." The cardinal at last gave his consent, on condition that Meilleraye and his heirs should adopt the name, title, and arms of Mazarin for ever. Mazarin died the following year, bequeathing his niece, it was said, the almost incredible sum of one million six hundred and twenty-five thousand pounds sterling.

The character of the Duke de Meilleraye, or, as he was now called, the Duke de Mazarin, was little in unison with that of his young, beautiful, and harebrained duchess. He seems to have been a solemn fool, jealous of his wife, narrow-minded, ill-natured, and capricious. He was not only a devotee, but believed himself inspired. His visions and revelations were the jest of the court. To such an extent did he carry his devotional prejudices, that, having taken under his charge an infant child of Madame de Richelieu, he actually forbade the nurse to give it suck on the fasting days of the Church. St. Evremond has a pleasant allusion to his nocturnal fancies. "Madame de Mazarin," he says, "was very wretched. She used to long for the approach of night, which brings succour to the most unhappy by drowning the sense of their miseries. But even this comfort

was denied her. No sooner did she close her beautiful eyes, but M. de Mazarin, this amiable husband, used to wake his best beloved, to make her partaker — you would never guess of what — to make her partaker of his midnight visions!" He adds, in another place, "that nature has set reason and M. de Mazarin so far apart, that it was almost impossible they could ever come together."

The duke is known to have laid down and published a code of moral rules, many of which are irresistibly ludicrous, but from their nature are unfit to be repeated. One of his practices was to make constant progresses through the large tracts of country which he possessed in different provinces. On these occasions he was accompanied by a numerous and motley train of enthusiasts, half ecclesiastics and half laymen.

With this strange personage the most self-willed and vivacious woman of her time continued to live for about six years. At length his follies and eccentricities wearied her beyond all endurance, and accordingly she suddenly quitted her husband's house, and instituted a suit against him in the courts of law for a separation and a division of effects. Her principal objections to him were his jealous disposition, his rigorous sanctity, his forcing her to accompany him on the most harassing journeys even when on the eve of her confinement, and the large amount of her wealth which he squan-

dered in alms. He had also grossly insulted her by hinting at her having been guilty of familiarities with one of her nearest relations.

While her suit was pending, the duchess, who was still only nineteen, found a refuge in different convents. Suddenly freed from an intolerable restraint, her wild frolics and volatile behaviour excited the anger and astonishment of the peaceable nuns. Her companion was Madame de Courceles, young, gay, handsome, and married like herself. One of the pranks of these lively ladies was to mix ink with the holy water, in order that the nuns might black their faces when they crossed themselves. Another amusement was to wait till the dead of night, when they used to run through the sleeping-rooms of the holy sisterhood with a number of small dogs yelling and barking at their heels. The duchess herself refers to these frolics in her memoirs, though she insists that they were greatly exaggerated. "It is true, however," she says, "that we filled two great chests that were over the dormitory with water, and, not perceiving the chinks in the floor, the water ran through and wet the beds of the poor nuns. It is true, also, that, on pretence of keeping us company, they never suffered us to be out of their sight. The oldest of the nuns, as being the most difficult to be bribed, was selected for this purpose; but, as as we had nothing to do but to run about, we soon tired them out, one after another, and one or two

of them sprained their legs in endeavouring to give us chase."

At length her frolics having obtained for her a very disagreeable notoriety at court, it was thought expedient that she should return to the Palais de Mazarin, the duchess, however, stipulating that, till the termination of the suit, she should occupy apartments separate from those of her inspired husband. It happened that her brother, the Duke de Nevers, resided in the adjoining palace to that of Mazarin. As her actions were constantly watched whenever she went abroad, and as her brother was also her friend, she caused a passage to be broken in the wall, by which means she could obtain access at all hours to his apartments. In a suit which many years afterward was instituted by the Duke de Mazarin for the recovery of his wife's person, his advocate, M. Herard, dwells at some length on this circumstance. "Through this breach," he says, "she conveyed away all the plate and richest furniture of her apartments, which amounted to an immense value." It is but fair to add, however, that the circumstance was solemnly denied in a defence of the duchess published at the time, and that the amount of the valuables thus removed was reduced to a single necklace.

Her suit was now drawing to a conclusion, and it was evident with but slender hopes of success. As a decision given in favour of her husband would

have invested him with increased conjugal powers, the reckless beauty determined on seeking safety in flight. Accordingly, on the 14th of June, 1667, on a pretence of indisposition, she secluded herself, with a favourite female domestic, in her sleeping apartment. Night having set in, their first step was to disguise themselves in male attire, in which costume they contrived to escape through one of the gates of the city to a spot where a carriage awaited them. Her other attendants were a servant of her brother, and a M. Courbeville, who had been prevailed upon to accompany her, but whom she had now beheld for the first time. The Chevalier de Rohan, one of the handsomest and most gallant men of the court, and on whom she was supposed to have bestowed some favours, was also her companion during the first stages of her expedition. It was not till the following morning that her flight was discovered. Her husband instantly flew to the king, and implored him to give orders that she might be arrested before she reached the frontiers. Her progress, however, had been too rapid, and she had already passed them before the order reached the authorities.

Her first flight was into Switzerland, and from thence into Italy. "We were known," she says, "in almost every place, to be women; Nanon, my maid, continuing still, through forgetfulness, to call me madam. Whether from this reason, or that my face gave cause of suspicion, the people,

when we had shut ourselves in, used to watch through the keyholes ; by which means they discovered our long tresses, which, as soon as we were left at liberty, as they were extremely inconvenient under our periwigs, we used gladly to untie. Nanon was particularly low in stature, and her figure was so ill adapted to man's apparel that I could never look upon her without laughing."

We have neither space nor leisure to follow this strange lady through all her fantastic wanderings and wild adventures. During the following years she rambled over most of the countries of Europe, "carrying with her," says M. Mazarin's advocate, "her own and her husband's shame over the world." We may remark, however, that after a residence of some length at Rome, and after a series of accidents in which she encountered the advances of rude soldiers and gallant cardinals, she again returned to France in disguise. This circumstance having become known to her husband, and her personal freedom being thus placed in considerable danger, she removed hastily into Savoy, and, after a residence of three years at Chambéry, came to the determination of paying a visit to England. Accordingly she embarked at Rotterdam, and, after a violent storm at sea which lasted five days, arrived in London in December, 1768. She was at this period in her twenty-ninth year, and, although the freshness of youth no longer bloomed upon her cheek, her beauty, at

the time when she commenced her manifestly pre-concerted attack on the heart of Charles, is said to have been but little impaired.

It was not long before she became a formidable rival to the Duchess of Portsmouth, then the reigning sultana. Charles, enslaved by her wit and beauty, allowed her apartments in St. James's palace, and settled on her a pension of four thousand a year. Waller, although in his seventy-fourth year, in his poem on the "Triple Combat," celebrates her arrival in England with all the gallantry and spirit of his youth. The poem commences :

"When through the world fair Mazarine had run,
Bright as her fellow traveller, the sun ;
Hither at length the Roman eagle flies,
As the last triumph of her conquering eyes."

Her triumph, however, was of short duration. It was her misfortune to fall in love with the Prince de Monaco, then on a visit in England, and, as usual, reckless of consequences, she made not the slightest attempt to conceal her partiality. Charles, naturally piqued, withheld her pension, which, however, was afterward good-naturedly restored.

It is impossible to mention the name of the Duchess of Mazarin without coupling it with that of St. Évremond. That witty and accomplished person, who was then an exile in England, natu-

rally hailed with delight the union with a spirit so congenial to his own. Neither can we mistake the admiration with which he evidently regarded her person. Her wit and beauty are the theme of all his writings ; so much so, that he seems to have questioned whether charms so dazzling, and accomplishments so brilliant, could possibly be obscured by a single blemish. With the gallantry of his country, rather than with the sobriety which became his years, he continued, to extreme old age, the homage which he had lavished on the beautiful duchess in his youth. It survived to a period of life when passion should have been a stranger to the one, and flattery unacceptable to the other. His devotion, in fact, only ceased with her death.

Of the octogenarian recollections of the Viscountess de Longueville, we have more than once availed ourselves. Her father had a house in Pall Mall, and she well remembered M. de. St. Evremond, "a little old man in his black silk coif," who used to be carried every morning by her window in a sedan-chair to the house of the duchess. He always took with him a pound of butter, made in his own little dairy, for her Grace's breakfast.

The house of the Duchess of Mazarin at Chelsea became the most remarkable of her time. Her saloons were the resort of the gay, the intellectual, and the beautiful. There were to be

found there the pleasures of the table combined with the charms of music, gaiety, and wit ; the basset-table for those who loved gaming, conversation for the more social, and probably dancing for the young. “Freedom and discretion,” writes St. Évremond, “are equally to be found there. Every one is made more at home than in his own house, and treated with more respect than at court. It is true there are frequent disputes there, but they are those of knowledge and not of anger. There is play there, but it is inconsiderable, and only practised for its amusement. You discover in no countenance the fear of losing, nor concern for what is lost. Some are so disinterested that they are reproached for expressing joy when they lose and regret when they win. Play is followed by the most excellent repasts in the world. There you will find whatever delicacy is brought from France, and whatever is curious from the Indies. Even the commonest meats have the rarest relish imparted to them. There is neither a plenty which gives a notion of extravagance, nor a frugality that discovers penury or meanness. Her guests,” he adds, “see nothing but her. They never come soon enough, nor depart late enough : they go to bed with regret to have left her, and they rise with a desire to behold her again.” The temple must indeed have been a classical one, of which the Duchess of Mazarin was the deity, and St. Évremond the high priest.

Her residence at Chelsea was, latterly at least, in a small house which she rented of Lord Cheyne.

It is impossible to glance over the pages of the courtly St. Evremond without catching a portion of his enthusiasm for the idol of his worship. Nevertheless, there were two sides to the picture. The spoiled beauty had her fits of peevishness, insolence, and spleen; and, in the last years of her life, is said to have resorted for adventitious excitement to the bottle. Moreover, there was perhaps no woman at the court of Charles whose gallantries were more notorious, or whose intrigues were more unblushingly profligate. Rochester, in his "Farewell to Court," places her the first in his "Roll of Infamy."

"Though on thy head grey hairs, like *Ætna's* snow,
Are shed, thou'rt fire and brimstone all below :
Thou monstrous thing, in whom at once do rage
The flames of youth and impotence of age."

Evelyn mentions his seeing her at Whitehall, a few days before the death of Charles, when the king was "toying" with her and his other beautiful mistresses, Cleveland and Portsmouth. She was afterward treated with kindness by King James, and was not only well received at his court, but, as appears by a letter from the Princess of Denmark to her sister Mary, was invited to be present at the accouchement of his queen.

The duchess survived the revolution, and met with civility at the gloomy court of King William. During the last years of her life, her allowance from her husband having been withdrawn, she lived in poverty and almost in distress. There is evidence, in the parish books of Chelsea, that she was in arrears for the payment of her poor rates during the whole time she resided in that place. A schedule of her debts, which she sent to her friends at Paris, amounted to no less than 8,333*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* After her death her body was actually taken possession of by her creditors. She died at her house at Chelsea, on the 2d June, 1699, in the fifty-third year of her age. The event is noted by Evelyn in his diary, a few days afterward, 11th June, 1699: “Now died the famous Duchess of Mazarin: she had been the richest lady in Europe. She was niece to Cardinal Mazarin, and was married to the richest subject in Europe, as is said. She was born in Rome, educated in France, and was of extraordinary beauty and wit, but dissolute and impatient of matrimonial restraint, so as to be abandoned by her husband and banished, when she came into England for shelter: she lived on a pension given her here, and is reported to have hastened her death by intemperate drinking strong spirits. She has written her own story and adventures, and so has her other extravagant sister, wife of the noble family of Colonna.” St.

Évremond frequently laments her in his writings, and sometimes in a very characteristic manner. In a letter to M. Silvester, he writes : " Had the poor Duchess of Mazarine been alive, she would have had peaches, of which I should not have failed to have shared ; she would have had truffles, which we should have eat together ; not to mention the carps of Newhall. I must make up the loss of so many ~~advantages~~, by the Sundays and Wednesdays of Montague House." Notwithstanding the apparently epicurean character of his attachment, St. Évremond, from the time of her death, is said never to have heard her name mentioned without tears.

CHAPTER XIII.

FRANCES STEWART, DUCHESS OF RICHMOND.

Her Lineage and Foreign Education — De Grammont's Portrait of Her — Description of her by Pepys — Her Frivolous Tastes — The Duke of Buckingham and George Hamilton Become Her Lovers — Romantic Attachments of Francis Digby and Rotier the Medallist — Charles Distracted by Her Obduracy — The Duke of Richmond Declares Himself her Suitor — Discovered in Her Apartment — Rage of the King — Elopes with, and Is Married to the Duke — Returns to Court — Charles boasts of her Favours over His Wine — Disfigured by the Smallpox — Specimen of Her Correspondence — Her Death.

THIS beautiful simpleton, who figures so conspicuously in the gay annals of the court of Charles, was the daughter of Walter Stewart, son of Walter, second Lord Blantyre. Her family, which had suffered for their loyalty during the civil troubles, boasted a kind of Scotch relationship to the king.

Frances Theresa Stewart was born about the year 1647. She was educated in France, from which country, in 1662, she came over to England with her mother, in the train of the queen-dowager, Henrietta Maria. As far as grace of

manner and a taste for dress were concerned, she appears to have singularly benefited by her foreign education. Of her early history we know but little, except that Louis XIV. was an ardent admirer of her person. Not improbably, like Charles, he was a suppliant for her favours ; at least, there seems no other reason for his having been desirous of detaining at his court a young lady who possessed no other qualification but a very pretty face. Pepys tells us, on the authority of his friend Evelyn : "The King of France would have had her mother, who is one of the most cunning women in the world, to have let her stay in France, saying that he loved her, not as a mistress, but as one that would marry as well as any lady in France." The queen-mother, however, insisted on the young beauty accompanying her to England, and Louis presented her with a valuable jewel when he unwillingly bade her farewell. Shortly after her arrival in England she was appointed maid of honour to Queen Catherine.

The feeling of Charles for "La Belle Stewart" seems to have approached nearer to what may be called love than any other of his libertine attachments. It originated, probably, in his constantly meeting her in the apartments of the Duchess of Cleveland, who, little aware of the dangerous rival she was fostering, had taken the new beauty into favour, and invited her to all the entertainments which she made for the

king. Among other civilities, she frequently detained Miss Stewart to pass the night in her apartment, and, as it was the daily practice of Charles to visit his mistress before she rose, he constantly found them in bed together. His attachment was neither slow in its progress, nor did he attempt to conceal it from the world. "The king," writes Pepys in 1663, "is now become besotted with Miss Stewart, getting her into corners; and will be with her half an hour together, kissing her, to the observation of all the world; and she now stays by herself, and expects it, as my Lady Castlemaine did use to do." These, and still greater liberties, which she permitted to Charles, though they never proceeded to actual criminality, denote nevertheless an unpardonable want of modesty in this passionless coquette.

Count Hamilton has drawn the portrait of Miss Stewart with his usual happy art. "It was hardly possible," he says, "for a woman to have less wit or more beauty: all her features were fine and regular, but her shape was not good; yet she was slender, straight enough, and taller than the generality of women; she was very graceful, danced well, and spoke French better than her mother-tongue; she was well-bred, and possessed in perfection that air of dress which is so much admired, and which is very rarely attained, unless acquired when young in France." Her appear-

ance on horseback is said to have been classically graceful and picturesque. Pepys gives us a graphic description of the return of a court party after a ride, at which Charles and his queen were present, and in which Miss Stewart figured the observed of all observers. "I followed them," he says, "into Whitehall, and into the queen's presence, where all the ladies walked, talking and fiddling with their hats and feathers, and changing and trying one another's by one another's heads, and laughing. But it was the finest sight to me, considering their great beauty and dress, that ever I did see in all my life. But, above all, Miss Stewart in this dress, with her hat cocked and a red plume, with her sweet eye, little Roman nose, and excellent *taille*, is now the greatest beauty I ever saw, I think, in my life." It was the peculiar elegance of her seat on horseback that captivated the sensitive George Hamilton, when he presented her with his heart, and with one of "the prettiest horses in England."

Unfortunately, her head was as empty as its shape was classical, and her amusements as frivolous as her face was beautiful. Moreover, she had a habit of laughing immoderately at the merest trifle. To obtain one of her sweetest smiles, it was only necessary to propose a game of blind man's buff. Hamilton won her admiration and regard by walking around the room with two lighted candles in his mouth, whereas Lord

Carlingford could only perform the feat with one. Hamilton was remarkable for rather a large mouth ; and accordingly, Killegrew, who was in the room, likened it, with some humour, to a lantern. Another of her fancies was building castles with cards, with which childish pastime she used nightly to amuse herself while the largest sums were being lost in her apartments. She was surrounded on these occasions by the gay danglers of the court, who of course affected a deep interest in her folly, and supplied her with the cards.

There was no one who could erect these paper castles with more dexterity than the Duke of Buckingham. He had also a fine voice, and, as the spoiled beauty delighted in his songs, he became her especial favourite. A man who could captivate and suit himself to all societies had little difficulty in charming Miss Stewart. His amusing stories, his tales of scandal, his mimicry, and keen sense of the ridiculous, rendered him so necessary to her happiness that, whenever he kept away from the king's apartments, she used to send over the town to have him brought to her. At last Buckingham took advantage of her partiality to make love to the spoiled beauty. He soon discovered, however, how little impression he had made on her heart ; and, indeed, met with rather a disagreeable rebuff. George Hamilton, who was over head and ears in love with her, was scarcely more successful. She gave

him, indeed, some encouragement ; but as it was evident she was only trifling with his weakness, De Grammont, who afterward married his charming sister, contrived to laugh him out of his folly.

The attachment of Francis Digby, son of the Earl of Bristol, was more romantic. He was passionately fond of her, and is said to have been so affected by her indifference as to have thrown away his life wantonly in the naval action with the Dutch in 1672. Dryden wrote some indifferent verses on the occasion, which the Duke of Buckingham afterward parodied, amusingly enough, in the “Rehearsal.”

The passion of Philip Rotier, the medallist, for “La Belle Stewart” is well known. According to Walpole, “being in love with the fair Mrs. Stewart, Duchess of Richmond, he represented her likeness under the form of Britannia, on the reverse of a large coin with the king’s head.” Felton, in his notes on Waller, repeats the same anecdote. He adds, too, “that so exact was the likeness, that no one who had ever seen her Grace could mistake who had sat for Britannia.” Waller wrote some verses on the subject ; but they rather tend to substantiate the truth of the story than to raise the fame of the poet.

In the meantime, unaccustomed to be baffled in his pursuit of pleasure, Charles had become no less distracted by the coldness of his new mistress than provoked by her obduracy. He once told

her, in real anger, that he hoped to see her grow old and willing. So paramount, nevertheless, was her influence over the king, that it was commonly believed, even by those who were best acquainted with his disposition, that he would willingly have divorced his neglected queen, and have raised her maid of honour to the throne. The world, however, on this occasion at least, did him singular injustice.

Latterly, the attentions of the Duke of Richmond to Miss Stewart had caused considerable uneasiness to her royal lover. This nobleman was Charles Stuart, the fourth Duke of Richmond, who was not very distantly related to the king. Though sottish in his habits, and possessing neither mental nor personal advantages, his high rank rendered him a formidable rival to his sovereign. However, Charles endeavoured to conceal his disquiet; and, under the pretence of a friendly interest in the worldly concerns of his wife's maid of honour, demanded so large a settlement from the duke, whose affairs were in rather an indifferent plight, that he considered it would put a stop to his addresses. The lady still continuing to encourage the attentions of his rival, Charles offered to create her a duchess, to settle on her a suitable estate, and to dismiss the Duchess of Cleveland and the rest of his seraglio, for her sake. But Miss Stewart had sense enough to be alive to her own interests, and to prefer a respectable and sub-

stantial match to a splendid intrigue. Accordingly, she plainly told the king that her reputation had already suffered too much by their intercourse; and that, unless she should speedily find an opportunity of contracting an honourable marriage, her fair fame would be tarnished for ever.

Accordingly, the Duke of Richmond having made her a solemn offer of his hand, she determined to brave the anger of the king, and to secure the coronet which was within her reach. The lovers, if such they may be styled, were engaged in plotting the means of flight, when the Duchess of Cleveland, galled by the neglect of Charles, and furious at being eclipsed by a younger rival, determined on enlightening the king as to the projects of "his angelic Stewart." Charles had returned to her in rather an ill humour from Miss Stewart's apartments, when his old mistress, with all the scornful bitterness of female jealousy and wounded pride, insultingly jeered him with being the dupe of his rival, and the laughing-stock of the court. "Miss Stewart," she said, "had doubtless dismissed him from her apartment on the ground of affected indisposition, or some pretended scruples of delicacy; but he had only to return to her chamber, and he would find his happy rival, the Duke of Richmond, occupying his place." While Charles was hesitating how to act, the duchess took him by the hand and drew him toward the door.

“Chiffinch,” says De Grammont, “being in her interest, Miss Stewart could have no warning of the visit ; and Babiani, who owed his all to the Duchess of Cleveland, and who served her admirably well upon this occasion, came and told her that the Duke of Richmond had just gone into Miss Stewart’s chamber. It was in the middle of a little gallery, which, through a private door, led from the king’s apartments to those of his mistresses. The Duchess of Cleveland, wishing him good night as he entered her rival’s chamber, retired in order to await the issue of the adventure, of which Babiani, who attended the king, was charged to come and give her an account.

“It was near midnight. The king, in his way, was met by his mistress’s chambermaid, who respectfully opposed his entrance ; and in a very low voice whispered his Majesty that Miss Stewart had been very ill since he left her ; but that, being gone to bed, she was, God be thanked ! in a very fine sleep. ‘That I must see,’ said the king, pushing her back, who had posted herself in his way. He found Miss Stewart in bed indeed, but far from being asleep ; the Duke of Richmond was seated at her pillow, and in all probability was less inclined to sleep than herself. The confusion of the one party, and the rage of the other, were such as may be easily imagined upon such an occasion. The king, who of all men was one of the most mild and gentle, expressed his resentment to the Duke

of Richmond in such terms as he had never before made use of. The duke was speechless, and almost petrified ; he saw his master and his king justly irritated. The first transports which rage inspires on such occasions are dangerous. Miss Stewart's window was very convenient for a sudden revenge, the Thames flowing close beneath it. He cast his eyes upon it, and seeing those of the king's more inflamed with indignation than he thought his nature capable of, he made a profound bow, and retired without replying a single word to the torrent of reproaches and menaces that was poured upon him." The duke retired from court, but shortly afterward returned privately and carried off his prize. On a stormy night, in March, 1667, Miss Stewart, having succeeded in eloping from her apartments at White-hall, joined the duke at a small inn in Westminster. From thence they fled on horseback into Surrey, where they were married on the following morning by the duke's chaplain.

The anger of Charles when he discovered the flight of his idol was excessive ; indeed, it was one of the very few instances in which he permitted the excitement of the moment to outstep the bounds of politeness. His feelings, on paying his customary visit to the private apartment of his mistress, and finding its inmate flown, may be readily conceived. According to Bishop Burnet, he was quitting her deserted apartment, having

that moment heard the news of her flight, when he encountered Lord Cornbury, who was on his way to pay her a visit. As this nobleman was the son of the great Lord Clarendon, who had been principally instrumental in uniting Miss Stewart to his rival, Charles naturally regarded him as an accomplice in the conspiracy ; more especially on finding him at such a juncture in so suspicious a place. Accordingly, he heaped on him the harshest invectives, and refused to listen to any explanation which Lord Cornbury had to deduce in his defence. It was, however, to the credit of Charles that he granted him an interview at night, and listened to him with his usual forbearance and high breeding. The Duke of Richmond and his bride were immediately banished the court, on which the duchess is said to have returned his Majesty the jewels which he had formerly presented to her.

The duchess's explanation of her conduct, as detailed by Pepys, does her credit. She told her friends that, owing to scandal having made so free with her reputation, she had long since resolved to accept the first gentleman with fifteen hundred a year who should make her an offer of his hand. It would have been impossible for her, she said, to have remained longer at court without yielding to the king's desires, and that, as far as dalliance went, she had already granted him more than he ought to have expected or than she should have

conferred. She added that, now she was a married woman, unless it were for the purpose of occasionally kissing the queen's hand, she intended altogether to absent herself from court, and that she should cheerfully retire to her husband's seat in the country, where it would be her object to reclaim him from his vices, of which, however, she added, she had but slender hopes. Further, the duchess denied having enriched herself by the influence of her charms. All, she said, that she had ever received at court was an allowance of seven hundred a year, out of the privy purse, for her clothes, a pearl necklace from the king, valued at eleven hundred pounds, and latterly some other jewels from his Majesty of less value. To these she added some trinkets, valued at eight hundred pounds, which she had received from the Duke of York when he was her Valentine ; and a ring, worth about three hundred, from Lord Mandeville, who had been her Valentine during the present year. Evelyn conceived her entire fortune, including these trinkets, to amount but to six thousand pounds.

Unfortunately, the duchess departed from her virtuous resolutions of leading a domestic life. The good-natured monarch forgave her the pain she had caused him, and, accordingly, the year after her marriage, we find her appointed a lady of the bedchamber to Queen Catherine, and apartments allotted to her in Somerset House. From

the time of her marriage, Charles, it is said, had no reason to complain of her want of complaisance; indeed, he was once so drunk at a party at Lord Townshend's as to boast to the duke, her husband, of the favours which his beautiful wife had conferred on him. Unfortunately, two years after her marriage, she caught the smallpox, which almost entirely destroyed her surpassing loveliness. Charles showed her the most affectionate kindness during her illness. Notwithstanding the risk which he incurred of catching the disorder, he paid several visits to her in her sick-chamber, and subsequently, notwithstanding the disfigurement to her charms, treated her with the same attention as when her beauty was in its zenith. She was probably well received at the court of James the Second, inasmuch as we find her attending the queen during her delivery in 1688, and signing the certificate before the council of the birth of the Prince of Wales.

The following unpublished letter of the Duchess of Richmond (addressed to Hyde, Earl of Rochester, on his being appointed lord high treasurer), is written in clear, bold characters, and is principally remarkable as a specimen of her composition.

“ MONDAY.

“ MY LORD :— Having been very ill these two days, and this morning being let blood in the jugular, I am not in a condition to wait upon my Lady

Rochester, which else I should have done, and hoped then to have seen your lordship with the treasurer's staff, and which sight must needs have done me good, it being one of the things in this world that I have the most wished for. Therefore, my lord, you will pardon, I hope, the impatency I have, which will not let me stay till I can see you, to wish you all the prosperity and happiness imaginable, and assure you of my being very zealously, my lord,

“Your lordship's most faithful, humble servant,

“F. RICHMOND AND LENNOX.

“*For the Earl of Rochester, Lord High Treasurer of England.*”

The duchess, who bore her husband no children, was left a widow in the prime of life, the duke dying at Elsinore — whither he had been sent as ambassador to the court of Denmark — on the 12th December, 1672. The duchess followed him to the grave on the 15th October, 1702, after a widowhood of thirty years. The annals of Queen Anne's reign, after noticing her decease, observe that she died a Roman Catholic, and “very devout in her way.”

In the dearth of any remarkable virtues, we may mention the following trifling incident in favour of the Duchess of Richmond. Poor Lee, in dedicating to her his “*Theodosius*,” speaks warmly of her love for the drama, and of her

personal kindness toward himself. She seems good-naturedly to have brought the Duchess of York to the theatre on his benefit night, a circumstance which filled the house, and consequently replenished the poet's pockets. Lee himself styles it a "poet's subsistence for a year." The duchess left a considerable fortune, which, with the exception of some annuities to her cats,¹ she bequeathed to her nephew, Alexander, fifth Lord Blantyre, who died in 1704. Agreeably with her last injunctions an estate was purchased in East Lothian, which was named by her own desire, "Lennox-Love to Blantyre." This property had been the residence of Secretary Maitland, and a spot near the house still bears the name of the "Politician's Walk." The duchess's gold dressing-case, as well as her watch and seal, are still in the possession of the present Lord Blantyre at "Lennox-Love."

¹ Pope alludes to the legacies which she left to her cats in his well-known line,

"Gone to endow a hospital or cat."

To this he appends a note, that "a Duchess of Richmond left annuities to her cats." "The lady as to whom he seems so uncertain," said Lord Hailes, "was La Belle Stewart of the Comte de Grammont. She left annuities to certain female friends, with the burden of maintaining some of her cats; a delicate way of providing for poor and, probably, proud gentlewomen, without making them feel that they owed their livelihood to her mere liberality."

CHAPTER XIV.

FRANCES JENNINGS, DUCHESS OF TYRCONNEL.

Her Beauty and Wit — The Duke of York a Candidate for Her Favours — She Makes Him Appear Ridiculous before the Court — The King Equally Unsuccessful in His Addresses — Her Wild Frolic in the Character of an Orange-girl — Her Different Lovers — Her Marriage with George Hamilton — Her Second Marriage (with the Duke of Tyrconnel) — Apocryphal Story of Her Poverty after the Death of the Duke — Distressing Circumstances Attending Her Dissolution — Inscription to Her Memory in the Scotch College at Paris.

FRANCES JENNINGS was another of those beautiful coquettes, who lived when female loveliness was more marketable and created more duchesses than at the present day. She was the daughter of Richard Jennings, Esquire, of Sundridge in Hertfordshire, and was the elder sister of Sarah, the celebrated Duchess of Marlborough. About the year 1664 she became maid of honour to Anne Hyde, Duchess of York. Among the fair and frail beings who figured at the libertine court of Charles, there are few who are described as having been more charming ; few, comparatively speaking, who conducted themselves with greater propriety.

“Miss Jennings,” says Count Hamilton, “was adorned with all the blooming treasures of youth. She had the fairest and brightest complexion that ever was seen; her hair was of a most beauteous flaxen; there was something particularly lively and animated in her countenance, which entirely did away with that appearance of insipidity which is frequently an attendant on a complexion so extremely fair. Her mouth was not the smallest, but it was the handsomest mouth in the world. Nature had endowed her with all those charms which cannot be expressed, and the graces had given the finish to them. The turn of her face was exquisitely fine, and her swelling neck was as fair and as bright as her face. In a word, her person gave the idea of Aurora, or the goddess of spring, ‘such as youthful poets fancy when they love.’ With so agreeable a person she united a fund of wit and sprightliness, and a carriage easy and unaffected. Her conversation was bewitching when she had a mind to please; piercing and delicate when disposed to raillyery.”

The Duke of York, who looked upon his wife’s maids of honour as his own property, did all in his power to overcome any virtuous scruples which might have accompanied this charming young lady to his brother’s court. All his attempts, however, were ineffectual. “Her eyes,” adds the same agreeable authority, “were always wandering on other objects, when those of his Royal Highness

were in search of them ; and if by chance he caught any casual glance, she did not even blush. This made him resolve to change his manner of attack ; ogling having proved ineffectual, he took an opportunity to speak to her ; and this was still worse. I know not in what strain he told his case, but it is certain that the oratory of the tongue was not more prevailing than the eloquence of his eyes." The eloquence of the pen, however, still remained to be tried. "Every day, billets, containing the tenderest expressions and the most magnificent promises, were slipped into her pockets or into her muff. This, however, could not be done unperceived, and the malicious little gipsy took care that those who saw them slip in should likewise see them fall out, unperused and unopened. She only shook her muff, or pulled out her handkerchief ; and, as soon as his back was turned, his billets fell about her like hailstones, and whoever pleased might pick them up."

The reputation of so much obduracy, and, at the same time, of so many charms, at length reached the ear of Charles. He had naturally no very favourable opinion of female virtue, and, imagining that his brother had failed from want of knowledge of the sex, determined on laying siege to the beautiful prude himself. As Miss Jennings was fond of admiration, and as the sight of a gay and agreeable monarch prostrate at her feet must have been rather a dangerous triumph to one so young,

it is probable that, under ordinary circumstances, Charles would not long have sighed in vain. Fortunately, however, the appearance of Frances Stewart at court diverted his attention to more alluring charms and a more difficult pursuit.

While the beauty and unusual propriety of the newcomer were still attracting the attention of the court, the giddy girl was indiscreet enough to embark in a wild frolic which very nearly had the effect of ruining her hitherto stainless reputation. The adventure in question, which has been chronicled by more than one contemporary writer, is thus recorded by Pepys. "What mad freaks," he says, "the maids of honour at court have! That Mrs. Jennings, one of the duchess's maids, the other day dressed herself like an orange wench, and went up and down and cried oranges; till, falling down, or by some accident, her fine shoes were discovered, and she put to a great deal of shame." The particulars of the adventure are well known, but will perhaps bear repetition.

Lord Rochester, at this time in disgrace at court, happened to be consoling himself for the king's displeasure by performing, in an obscure corner of the city, the character of a German empiric and fortune-teller. The success of his celebrated frolic is well known. His fame, which at first had been merely local, had gradually spread itself abroad, till at last it reached the

ears of the court. Rochester was of course equally as well acquainted with the scandal of the day as with the persons and characters of those who figured in the licentious court of his royal master. Accordingly, having recognised one or two of the female attendants of the maids of honour, who had eagerly flocked to consult him, he sent them back so amazed by his superhuman powers as to excite the curiosity of their mistresses. The result fully answered Rochester's expectations. Under the protection of the then fashionable mask, there was more than one giddy maid of honour who made up her mind to dive into the secrets of futurity by means of the German mountebank. Who, indeed, could gravely blame them, when even the queen herself had set the example of risking her reputation by indulging in similar masquerading frolics ?

Among those whose curiosity was thus excited were Miss Jennings and Miss Price, the latter a young lady of indifferent reputation, who had formerly been a maid of honour to the Duchess of York. Miss Jennings, young and indiscreet, believing that, as long as she preserved her virtue, it mattered little how she obtained amusement, easily enlisted her friend in her mad schemes. Accordingly, having provided themselves with the dresses of orange-girls (a garb usually worn by the least reputable members of society), they issued from St. James's Palace, and, crossing

the park on foot, entered a hackney-coach at Whitehall.

They had nearly reached the theatre, where they knew the duchess to be in person, when Miss Price had the imprudence to propose their joining the real orange-girls and selling their fruit in the face of the court. As they entered the theatre, they encountered "the handsome Sydne," who was just then alighting from his carriage. Miss Price offered him her basket; but the dandy, either lost in the contemplation of his own charms, or of those of his mistress, the Duchess of York, took no notice of the masqueraders. Their next adventure was with Killegrew, to whom Miss Jennings timidly held out her basket, while the other, in the cant language of the place, requested him to buy "her fine oranges." The challenge was met by the libertine in the kind of manner that might have been expected. He even gave proof of his admiration of Miss Jennings by so rude a homage as to bring the blush to her cheek and the fire to her eye. Leaving Killegrew to enjoy a hearty laugh at the preposterous notion of the existence of a virtuous orange-girl, Miss Price hastily dragged away her friend, whom terror and indignation had rendered nearly powerless.

Their fright, however, was insufficient to prevent their pursuing the original frolic of the evening. Having entered another hackney-coach, they were on the point of alighting within a few doors

of the fortune-teller's, when, to their consternation, they encountered a far more dangerous person than Killegrew. This was no other than the immortal and licentious Brouncker, who, having been dining with a merchant in the neighbourhood, was on his way homewards, when the novelty of seeing two orange-girls in a hackney-coach attracted his attention. Perceiving themselves to be objects of curiosity to so dangerous a libertine, they desired their coachman to drive on, and to put them down in another part of the street. Brouncker, however, stealthily followed them ; nor was his astonishment diminished when he perceived that the shoes and stockings that covered the pretty feet and ankles which alighted from the vehicle were of a quality strangely at variance with the rest of the costume. Having contrived to obtain a glimpse of their faces, which they vainly endeavoured to conceal from him, he at once recognised the beautiful maid of honour, on whose motives for disguise he naturally put the worst possible construction. Believing that an assignation on the part of the chaste Miss Jennings was at the bottom of the frolic, and delighted with the tale of scandal with which he had it in his power to amuse the court, he continued to tease the frightened girls for a short time, without betraying that he had recognised them, and then laughingly wished them good night.

Unfortunately, the disagreeable adventures of the night were not yet at an end. During the

time that the two maids of honour had been enduring the impertinences and libertine proposals of Brouncker, a crowd of blackguard boys, not contented with collecting around their coach, had made a violent attack on their orange baskets. The coachman had taken the part of his fare; and, in consequence of his gallantly resisting the attempts of the depredators, a fight had ensued and the street was in an uproar. The fruit, of course, was only too gladly relinquished to the mob, from whom, notwithstanding, the presumed orange-girls received a volley of abuse and ridicule. Finally, though with some difficulty, they contrived to reenter their coach, and at last arrived, completely frightened and dispirited, at St. James's.

At the period of this adventure Miss Jennings was surrounded by a crowd of lovers. Fortunately for her reputation, they seem to have regarded her conduct as the frolic of a young and giddy girl, and to have thought none the worse of her for her indiscretion. The swaggering and gigantic Talbot,¹ afterward Duke of Tyrconnel, had early

¹ Richard, or Dick Talbot, as he was familiarly called, was descended from an ancient family of English extraction, who had early settled in Ireland. He commenced life as a profligate and ended it as a bigot. Clarendon informs us that he was the person selected to assassinate Cromwell, and that he willingly undertook to execute the deed. At another time we find him cruelly and impudently insisting on his intimacy with Anne Hyde, in order to prevent her union with the Duke of York. In person he was far above the common stature, and was extremely

declared himself her admirer. Though eminently handsome, though possessed of a considerable but ill-acquired fortune, and of an ancient family, he had already been rejected by "La Belle Hamilton," and was destined to encounter the same rebuff from Miss Jennings. His rival was Henry Jermyn, — "Le Petit Jermyn," — the most formidable lover and the most insufferable puppy of the court. The nature of Jermyn's intentions seem to have been extremely questionable, although, when the Duchess of York interposed for the honour of her charming attendant, he passionately affirmed his views

graceful and well-made. He possessed considerable knowledge of the world, and had early been introduced into the best society. To his friends he is said to have been generous and obliging, and it was much to his credit that at the revolution no offers could induce him to desert the king's interests. His conduct in Ireland at that period is matter of history. He strenuously espoused the cause of James; but, as his capacity was inferior to his zeal, and as he had more personal courage than military genius, his services were of little avail. "From the time of the battle of the Boyne," says the Duke of Berwick, "he sunk prodigiously, and became as irresolute in his mind as unwieldy in his person." He died at Limerick, 5th August, 1591. Andrew Marvell says, in his "Advice to a Painter":

"Next, Talbot must by his great master stand,
Laden with folly, flesh, and ill-got land ;
He's of a size indeed to fill a porch,
But ne'er can make a pillar of the church.
His sword is all his argument, not his book ;
Although no scholar, he can act the cook,
And will cut throats again, if he be paid ;
In the Irish shambles he first learned the trade."

A stanza is also allotted to Talbot in the famous doggrel ballad of "Lillibullero."

to be honourable. With this insignificant coxcomb, Miss Jennings, following the example of older beauties than herself, fell violently in love ; and, as the world really believed he intended to make her his wife, she was complimented on having humbled so formidable a gallant. While their intimacy, however, was still supplying gossip to the court, an accident happened to her lover, which for a time deprived her of his society. Jermyn, it seems, had laid a wager of five hundred guineas, that with one horse he would ride the distance of twenty miles on the highroad in an hour. This feat he accomplished. The exertion proved too much for his strength, and consequently for a considerable time he was confined to his house as an invalid.

This was a fortunate juncture which the stately Talbot conceived he might easily improve to his own advantage. He had formerly paid his addresses to Miss Jennings, but having presumed to give her some proper, though unseasonable, advice, he had met with a spirited rebuff. He was one day seated alone in Miss Jennings's apartment, and was about to commence the tenderest of all possible appeals, when their privacy was suddenly broken in upon by Miss Temple, who entered with a paper in her hand. According to De Grammont, “the paper which Miss Temple brought was a poetical epistle, which Lord Rochester had written some time before, upon the intrigues of the two courts. In this, speaking of Miss Jennings, he said ‘that

Talbot had struck terror among the people of God by his gigantic stature; but that Jermyn, like a little David, had vanquished the great Goliath.' Miss Jennings, delighted with this allusion, read it over two or three times, thought it more entertaining than Talbot's conversation, and at first heartily laughed at it; but soon after, assuming a tender air, 'Poor little David!' she said, with a deep sigh, and turning her face on one side during this short reverie, she shed a few tears, which assuredly did not flow for the defeat of the giant. Talbot was stung to the quick; and, seeing himself so ridiculously deceived in his hopes, he quitted the room abruptly, vowing never to think any more of a giddy girl, in whose conduct there was neither rhyme nor reason." Talbot, it may be mentioned, was afterwards sufficiently avenged on his mistress, by the apostacy of the unworthy Jermyn, who, finding the virtue of Miss Jennings impregnable, became more and more cold in his attentions. His visits evidently wore the air rather of habit or duty than of love, and ere long were entirely discontinued.

The person on whom the choice of Frances Jennings subsequently fell was Sir George Hamilton, grandson of James, first Earl of Abercorn. He was a younger brother and without fortune. They were married in 1665. This was the same Hamilton who figures in the gay annals of his brother-in-law, the Count de Grammont, as the

successful lover of Mrs. Wetenhall and the imprudent admirer of Miss Stewart. His youth seems to have been passed in fighting and making love; and as he rose to be a maréchal-de-camp in France, and as beauty smiled upon him, it must be presumed that he was successful in both of his favourite pursuits. Evelyn styles him “a valiant and worthy gentleman.” He survived their marriage but a few years, leaving a young widow with three daughters: Elizabeth, who married Lawrence, Viscount Ross; Frances, who married Henry, Viscount Dillon; and Mary, who became the wife of Nicholas, Viscount Kingsland. They were distinguished as the “three viscountesses” at the vice-regal court, and lie buried together in the cathedral at Dublin.

Miss Jennings, now Lady Hamilton, shortly after the death of her husband accidentally encountered in France her former admirer, Talbot. He, too, having closed the eyes of the “languishing Boynton,” whom he had been bold enough to make his wife, had become a widower and an exile. As the object of his early attachment was still young and charming, he renewed his addresses, and, accordingly, in 1679, they were married at Paris.

At the accession of James, Talbot was created Earl of Tyrconnel, and received a commission as lieutenant-colonel to command the royal forces in Ireland. At the revolution of 1688, he declared

for King James, and, having actively supported the cause of that monarch, was rewarded by him with the Dukedom of Tyrconnel, and made Viceroy of Ireland. His lady accompanied him to that country. She seems to have been his companion during those stirring times, and, after the battle of the Boyne, entertained King James in the castle of Dublin. Lord Melfort, who was secretary to that monarch, reports harshly, in his letters to James, of her intriguing disposition and improper interference in the king's affairs. She is reported, he says, to have *l'ame la plus noire qui se puisse concevoir*. What degree of truth there may be in his condemnations, or to what extent the once giddy maid of honour may have been metamorphosed into the restless politician, it is now impossible to ascertain. Lord Melfort, at all events, is not a person whose praise or blame must be received without qualification.

At the death of Tyrconnel, in 1691, his widow retired to the Continent, where she subsisted for some time on a small pension she received from the French court. If we are to place any credit in a strange story, related both by Walpole and Pennant, she was residing in London shortly after this period, in extreme distress. The latter, in his account of London, speaking of the New Exchange, which stood to the north of Durham Yard, in the Strand, thus relates the questionable anecdote: "Above stairs sat, in the character

of a milliner, the reduced Duchess of Tyrconnel, wife of Richard Talbot, Lord Deputy of Ireland under James the Second. The female suspected to be his duchess, after his death, supported herself for a few days, till she was known and otherwise provided for, by the little trade of the place. She had delicacy enough to wish not to be detected: she sat in a white mask, and a white dress, and was known by the name of the White Milliner." The story is undoubtedly apocryphal.

In the year 1708 we find the Duchess of Tyrconnel a resident at Brussels, where she was visited by her brother-in-law, the great Duke of Marlborough. He seems to have shown her some attentions, and in his letters to his duchess speaks of her with kindness. On the 14th of May he writes: "I went yesterday to wait upon Lady Tyrconnel, who, I think, is grown very old, and her hoarseness much worse than when I saw her last." Again, the duke writes: "When I took leave of Lady Tyrconnel, she told me that her jointure in Ireland was in such disorder that there was an absolute necessity for her going there for two or three months, for the better settling of it. As the climate of Ireland will not permit her being there in the winter, she should begin her journey about ten days hence. She said that she did not intend to go to London, but hoped she might have the pleasure of seeing you at St. Albans. I have offered her

all that might be in my power to make her journey to Holland and England easy ; as also, that if she cared to stay at St. Albans, either at her going or return, you would offer it to her with a good heart. You will find her face a good deal changed, but in the discourse I have had with her she seems to be very reasonable and kind." It has generally been insisted that she was on indifferent terms with her haughty sister. The duke's letters, however, are strongly opposed to any such supposition.

A portion of her husband's property having been restored to her by the Crown, the duchess returned to Dublin shortly after this period, and continued to reside in that city during the remainder of her life. She was regarded by those who enjoyed her society as a religious devotee, and is said to have established a nunnery in King Street, in the Irish capital. Her marriage with Tyrconnel had probably led to her embracing the faith of Rome. She survived to her eighty-second or eighty-third year, expiring on the 12th March, 1731, at the house of her late husband, in Paradise Row, Dublin. The circumstances of her dissolution presented a painful contrast to the brilliancy of her early career. "Her death," says Walpole, "was occasioned by her falling out of her bed, on the floor, in a winter's night ; and being too feeble to rise or to call, was found in the morning so perished with cold, that she

died in a few hours." Those who remembered her in her old age described her as having been low in stature and extremely emaciated. There remained no trace of the surpassing loveliness which had formerly fascinated the fastidious court of Charles.

In the Rue des Fossés St. Victor, at Paris, may be seen a neglected, but, to an Englishman, a most interesting building, which fortunately escaped the fury and the bigotry of the French Revolution. There, in the chapel of what was formerly the Scots College, among other monuments which recall the misfortunes of the house of Stuart and of their adherents, may be seen a plain tablet, bearing the following inscription :

D. O. M.
Æternæ Memoriae
Illustrissimæ et nobilissimæ Dominæ
Franciscæ Jennings,
Ducissæ de Tyrconnell,
Reginæ Mag. Brit. Matronæ Honorariæ,
Hujus Collegii Benefacticis,
Quæ Missam Quotidianam in hoc sacrario
Fundavit perpetuò celebrandam
Pro animâ suâ et animâ ejus Dni Georgii
Hamilton de Abercornæ Equitis aurati
Conjugis sui primi, et Dni Richardi Talbot
Ducis de Tyrconnell Proregis Hyberniæ,
Secundi sui conjugis.
Obiit die XII Martii. An. Domini
MDCCXXXI.
Requiescat in Pace.

By her second husband the Duchess of Tyrconnel was the mother of two daughters. Of these, Lady Charlotte Talbot married the Prince de Vintimiglia; but of her sister the name and story have alike passed into oblivion.

CHAPTER XV.

CHARLES SACKVILLE, EARL OF DORSET.

Rochester's Saying Respecting the Earl of Dorset — His Character — Becomes a Great Favourite with Charles II. — His Wild Frolics — Takes Nell Gwynn under His Protection — His Famous Song, “To All Ye Ladies Now on Land” — His Two Marriages — His Patronage of Literature — Assists the Princess Anne in Her Flight — Is in Great Favour with William III. — His Narrow Escape at Sea — His Death — Congreve's Opinion of His Wit.

“I KNOW not how it is,” said Lord Rochester; “but my Lord Dorset can do anything, and yet is never to blame.” There is certainly no memoir of this nobleman which is not a panegyric; neither do the encomiums seem to have been exaggerated. Indeed, if it approaches excellence to have fostered genius, and to have been the friend of the unfortunate; to have been charitable to an excess, and tender-hearted to a fault; to have been a man of letters without envy, and a courtier without malice; to have been a friend of all parties, yet the consistent supporter of his own; to have been possessed of a classical taste and romantic courage, of the most engaging manners and the sprightliest fancy,— the meed must be awarded

to the accomplished Dorset, the poet, the philanthropist, and the wit.

Charles, Lord Buckhurst, which was the title he bore for many years, was born on the 24th January, 1637. He was educated by a private tutor, and in early youth made the tour of Europe. At the Restoration he was elected member for East Grinstead in Sussex, and in the House of Commons gave sufficient promise of future excellence. Inheriting, however, but little taste for business, he unfortunately preferred the society of men of wit and the charms of literature to the fatigue of public employments, and the temptation of popular applause. With Charles, who made him a gentleman of his bedchamber, he was ever an especial favourite. He was a chosen guest at all the social suppers of the "merry monarch," and in that brilliant circle of merry courtiers and witty statesmen, whom Charles assembled around him, there was no one whose society was more courted or whose conversation was more admired. His spirits, however, were not always the highest, and required adventitious excitement. According to Burnet, it was only when the bottle had passed freely that his conviviality flowed on a level with that of others.

In our admiration of one so accomplished, we must not forget the errors of his early career. The fact is not without interest, that a life afterward so circumspect, and conduct so unimpeach-

able, should have been preceded by a youth of frolic, debauchery, and excess. Certain it is, that the future Mæcenas of his day—“the best good man,” as he is styled by Rochester—descended to riot with the most unblushing profli-gates of the court, and became the boon companion of such men as Sedley and Killegrew, who, however gifted and witty, were totally without principle, religion, or even honour.

Anthony Wood, in his life of himself, incidentally mentions a party at Sir Henry Saville's, the English ambassador at Paris, at which Lord Buck-hurst and other libertines are described as “enjoying themselves, talking blasphemy and atheism.” Not long afterward, a wild scrape in which he was engaged very nearly cost him his life. This incident occurred in 1662, when, with his brother, Edward Sackville, and some other friends, he was committed at Newgate, on a charge of highway robbery and murder. According to the most favourable construction which has been put upon the story, these reckless libertines happened to be in pursuit of some thieves near Waltham-cross, when, in endeavouring to secure one Hoppy, a tanner, whom they believed to be an accomplice, they deprived this unfortunate and innocent person of life. This was their own account of the affair. The worst part of the transaction was the undeniable fact that the man was not only killed but plundered. Moreover, the story is in other

respects involved in mystery. Pepys, who was in a situation to hear all the gossip of the day, expresses his doubt, notwithstanding the published explanatory statement of the offenders, whether the affair would not terminate more seriously than they flattered themselves would be the result. The grand jury, however, brought in a bill of manslaughter only, and of this offence they were afterward acquitted at their trial.¹

The following year, 1663, we find Lord Buckhurst engaged in a frolic with Sir Charles Sedley and Sir Thomas Ogle, in which, although the consequences were less serious, the transaction was even more disreputable. This affair, the particulars of which are wholly unfit for publication, took place after a debauch at the Cock Tavern, Bow Street, then a famous house of recreation. Sir Charles Sedley, who was the worst of the party, was tried before Sir Robert Hyde, Chief Justice of the Com-

¹“A very unfortunate accident happened. The Lord Buckhurst; his brother, Mr. Edward Sackville; Sir Henry Bellasis, Knight of the Bath, son and heir to the Lord Bellasis; Mr. Bellasis, brother to the Lord Fauconbridge; and Mr. Wentworth, son to Sir George, accompanying an acquaintance out of town, upon their return, being informed there were highwaymen and thieves on the road, meeting a tanner, and suspecting him for one of them, after some resistance made by him, killed him; for this mischance they were arraigned at the King's Bench bar, but by the jury quitted, it not being probable that persons of their estates and quality would set upon a single person to do him injury, but it might happen merely by a mistake, and good intent of freeing the road.”

mon Pleas, and fined in the large sum of five hundred pounds. His lordship's name having transpired during the proceedings, the judge inquired, says Pepys, "whether it was that Buckhurst that was lately tried for robbery; and when answered yes, he asked whether he had so soon forgot his deliverance at that time; and that it would have more become him to have been at his prayers, begging God's forgiveness, than now running into such courses again." There must have been more in the story of the robbery than has been handed down to us, or the judge would scarcely have ventured upon such an admonition. Fortunately, from this period we hear little of Lord Dorset's debaucheries. It may be remarked, however, that Nell Gywnn was for some time under his protection, previously to her becoming the mistress of Charles.

In what was still an ostentatious and a romantic age,—when the sun of chivalry had scarcely yet set, and when, to be considered valiant, it was necessary to have given personal proof of valour,—the gay courtiers of Charles made war a pastime, and eagerly volunteered their services in the sickliest climates and on the most hazardous expeditions. Among these candidates for fame was Lord Buckhurst. In 1665 he hastened on board the fleet under the Duke of York, and consequently was present at the great naval fight of the third of June, when the Dutch Admiral

Opdam was blown up, and thirty of his ships either destroyed or captured. The night before the action, with a gallantry and recklessness of spirit the true philosophy of which is questionable, he is said to have composed his famous song :

“ To all ye ladies now on land,
We men at sea indite,” etc.

Whether the song were really written on the eve of the battle, may perhaps be doubted ; there is certainly no reference to any proximity on the part of the enemy’s fleet, a circumstance which could hardly fail to have been touched upon, had it been known to the writer. The young and courtly volunteers seem to have passed their time pleasantly enough :¹

“ To pass the tedious hours away,
We throw a merry main,
Or else at serious ombre play ;
But why should we in vain
Each other’s ruin thus pursue ?
We were undone when we left you,
With a fa, la, la, la, la.

¹ According to Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, however, they were sufficiently long at sea to grow tired of each other’s society. “ ’Tis observable,” he says, “ that the first night we came to London, the Lord Blany, Sir Thomas Clifford, afterward lord treasurer, Mr. Henry Saville, and myself, though such familiar friends as to be very often together for many years after, were then so satiated and cloyed with each other, by our being shut up together so long in one ship, that I remember we avoided one another’s company at least for a whole month after ; though, except myself, there could hardly be any more pleasant.”

“ But now our fears tempestuous grow,
And cast our hopes away;
Whilst you, regardless of our woe,
Sit careless at a play:
Perhaps permit some happier man,
To kiss your hand, or flirt your fan,
With a fa, la, la, la, la.”

In 1674 Lord Buckhurst, by the death of his uncle, Lionel, Earl of Middlesex, became possessed of a considerable property, and in April, 1675, was created Baron of Cranfield and Earl of Middlesex. By the decease of his father, in 1677, he succeeded as sixth Earl of Dorset, and about the same time was appointed Lord-lieutenant of Sussex. During the reign of Charles he was employed on more than one embassy to France. They were missions, however, which required rather the graces of a fine gentleman than the qualifications of a man of business or any eminent diplomatic qualifications. In 1684 he married Elizabeth, daughter of Hervey Bagot, Esq., of Pipe Hall, in Warwickshire, widow of Charles Berkeley, Earl of Falmouth, by whom he had no children. He afterward united himself to an accomplished and beautiful woman, Lady Mary Compton, daughter of James, Earl of Northampton, who also died in his lifetime, in 1691. By this lady he had one son, Lionel, who succeeded him in his titles, and a daughter, Mary, who became the wife of Henry, second Duke of Beaufort. She died in child-bed on the 18th of June, 1705.

The literature of his time is replete with the praises of Lord Dorset. As there was scarcely a man of letters who was not his personal friend, and as there were many who experienced the kindness of his heart and owed their success to his judgment and patronage, they have naturally recorded their own gratitude and the earl's merits. Prior, in his poetical epistle to Fleetwood Sheppard, describing his first introduction at court, pays a graceful tribute to the good humour of the earl :

“ When crowding folks, with strange ill faces,
Were making legs, and begging places;
And some with patents, some with merit,
Tired out my good Lord Dorset's spirit,” etc.

His contemporaries appear to have paid no less deference to his taste. Dryden, who dedicated to him his translation of Juvenal, affirms that his lordship's satire was the model of his own. Wycherley owed to his judgment the success of the “Plain Dealer ;” and Butler that his “ Hudibras ” was appreciated and his fame established. Rymer says, in dedicating to him his “ Short View of Tragedy,” “ It was principally your countenance that buoyed me up and supported a righteous cause against the prejudice and corruption then reigning.” Buckingham withheld the “ Rehearsal ” till he knew his fiat, and Charles declined to approve the paintings of Lely till a verdict had been given by Lord Dorset. Pope, when Lord Dorset died,

must have been too young to have personally known him; but he had probably listened to the praises of older bards, and consequently pays a tribute as glowing as the rest. In the words of Walpole, "He was the finest gentleman in the voluptuous court of Charles the Second and in the gloomy one of King William. He had as much wit as his first master, or his contemporaries, Buckingham and Rochester, without the royal want of feeling, the duke's want of principles, or the earl's want of thought." Burnet completes the picture. "Never," he says, "was so much ill-nature in a pen as in his, joined with so much good-nature as was in himself, even to excess, for he was against all punishing, even of malefactors. He was bountiful, even to run himself into difficulties; and charitable to a fault, for he commonly gave all that he had about him when he met an object that moved him. But he was so lazy that, though the king seemed to court him to be a favourite, he would not give himself the trouble that belonged to that post." The contrast between the acrimony of his pen and the sweetness of his disposition is celebrated in the well-known couplet of Rochester :

"For pointed satire I would Buckhurst chuse,
The best good man with the worst-natured muse."

Pope also echoes the sentiment in his panegyric on the earl :

“The scourge of pride, though sanctified or great,
Of fops in learning, and of knaves in state ;
Yet soft his nature, though severe his lay,
His anger moral and his wisdom gay.”

Like many men of an open and generous disposition, his temper appears to have been hasty and occasionally violent. Prior says “that in these moments of ebullition his servants used purposely to throw themselves in his way ; they knew by experience that they would hereafter be sufficiently rewarded for their momentary exposure to his wrath.” Lord Dorset said of a heavy, good-natured simpleton : “It is a thousand pities that he is not ill-natured, that we might kick him out of the room.”

At the coronation of James the Second, we find him carrying a portion of the queen’s regalia in the procession. The political principles, however, of this reign accorded but little with his own, and accordingly at the revolution he eagerly attached himself to the fortunes of the Prince of Orange. He was accordingly selected to accompany Queen Anne, then Princess of Denmark, when she fled from the roof of her father. The princess sought refuge in the house of the Bishop of London in Aldersgate Street, from whence the earl conducted her, attended by the bishop and about forty horsemen, to Nottingham, where the Earl of Devonshire gave her a guard of two hundred men. At this place she was shortly afterward joined by her hus-

band, and the earl was consequently relieved from his charge.

During the excitement of this period appeared the famous Irish song of "Lillibullero." This clever trifle, which created a far greater sensation than commonly falls to the lot of a mere ballad, was generally attributed to Lord Dorset. There was a particular expression in it, which, according to King James, he well remembered Lord Dorset to have made use of in the course of one of their conversations, which appears to have given birth to the surmise. The authorship of this ballad has since, we believe, been fathered elsewhere.

King William, shortly after his elevation to the throne, showed his gratitude to the earl by selecting him for the post of lord chamberlain, a place for which his knowledge of the court and his personal accomplishments rendered him eminently qualified. He was also sworn of the Privy Council, and restored to the lord-lieutenancy of Sussex, of which he had been deprived by James. His countess, about the same time, was made a lady of the bedchamber to Queen Mary.

The earl's society was as eagerly courted by the phlegmatic William as it had formerly been by the dissolute Charles. In 1691 he was selected by the former monarch to accompany him to The Hague, in order to be present during the conference with the German confederacy. They embarked on the 16th of January, and had

approached within three leagues of Goree, when the wind prevented the royal squadron from approaching nearer to the shore. The king, impatient at this conclusion of a tedious voyage, expressed his determination of making for land in one of the ship's boats. Unfortunately, the sea was covered with floating masses of ice, and subsequently a dense fog gathering around them, they were unable to reach the shore or regain their vessel. In this perilous condition, in the bitterest weather, they continued about twenty-two hours. When they at length gained the land, there was scarcely one of the party who could either speak or stand.

In the course of the following month, Lord Dorset was rewarded with the Order of the Garter. During this reign also he was nominated, on four different occasions, a member of the regency during the absence of King William from his British dominions.

In 1699, Lord Dorset's health beginning to decline, he considered it his duty to resign his post of lord chamberlain. Lord Dartmouth, on the other hand, asserts, in his notes to Bishop Burnet's history, that the earl disposed of the office to the king for ten thousand pounds. Macky says of the earl, when he was in the decline of life, "He is still one of the pleasantest companions in the world when he likes his companion; he is very fat, troubled with the spleen, and turned of sixty

years." Swift, however, adds in MS. on this passage, "Not of late years, but a very dull one." The earl had latterly grown corpulent, and, during the long illness which preceded his death, he suffered much from bodily pain. His physicians prescribed the air and waters of Bath, in which city he died, on the 29th of January, 1706, in his seventieth year. He was buried in the family vault at Withiam. Congreve, who visited him in the last days of his life, observed that he "slabbered" more wit while dying than other people were in the habit of doing in their best health.

CHAPTER XVI.

JOHN WILMOT, EARL OF ROCHESTER.

His Personal Appearance—Admitted to the Private Parties of Charles—His Gallantry in the Dutch War—Quarrel with Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham—Rochester Forfeits His Reputation for Courage—His Wild Frolics—His Frequent Disgraces at Court—Practices in the Character of Fortune-teller—Burnet's Severe Picture of the Libertine Poet—Lively Specimen of Rochester's Correspondence—His Abduction of Elizabeth Mallet—His Marriage—Character of His Wife—Specimens of Their Correspondence—Rochester's Illness—His Religious Doubts—His Death-bed Repentance—His Last Moments—Reflections of Archbishop Tillotson.

THERE can be no conduct more cruel, no crime of greater magnitude, than that of an author of established genius lending to impiety or lasciviousness the weight and lustre of his name. As regards the ordinary profligate, or the infidel in social life, inasmuch as their talents are probably of no high order, and their powers of doing mischief contracted to a narrower sphere, so is their example less dangerous and the disease more remediable. But with respect to the man of genius, whose doctrines coexist with the language of his country, the case is widely different. His ravages are extended over a far wider space; he instils

his poison into the young and inexperienced, and extends the corruption and its bitterness to unborn generations. Fascinated by alluring descriptions, or ingenious sophistries, the heart that was once chaste becomes polluted, and the faith that hitherto remained unquestioned is undermined, if not entirely destroyed. Genius, however depraved, too frequently excites admiration where it should raise abhorrence. It carries with it, unfortunately, its own passport, and glitters too often and too successfully through the shroud of obloquy with which the wise and the virtuous would willingly veil it from the world.

The daring profligate, on whom these remarks have been hazarded, was born at Ditchley in Oxfordshire, on the 10th of April, 1648. His father was Henry, Lord Wilmot, who shared the sufferings of Charles the Second after the battle of Worcester, and who was rewarded by that monarch with the earldom of Rochester. His only surviving child, the subject of this memoir, was educated at the free-school at Burford, near his native place. At the age of twelve he was entered at Wadham College, Oxford. In the several editions of his works are preserved a copy of verses, said to have been composed by him at this early age, addressed to the king on his happy restoration. The young poet professes himself —

“One whose ambition 'tis for to be known,
By daring loyalty your Wilmot's son.”

Anthony Wood questions the authenticity of this early specimen of Rochester's muse. As the verses possess no higher merit than usually attaches itself to similar precocious juvenilities, the question is of very trifling importance.

In the study of the classical authors Rochester made a rapid progress, and is said to have early acquired a taste for their beauties which he retained to the last. Unfortunately, while he was infected with all the indecency of Ovid, he caught none of his refinement.

In the year 1661 he was admitted a master of arts in convocation, Lord Clarendon, the chancellor of the university, distinguishing him from other candidates, by affectionately admitting him to the fraternity with a kiss. He afterward travelled into France and Italy, and, returning from the Continent at the age of eighteen, was presented at the dangerous court of Charles. His demeanour at this period is said to have been remarkable for its modesty. His manners were graceful, his figure tall and slender, and his face handsome and animated. Young as he was, his wit and companionable qualities were speedily discovered, and, accordingly, before long, he became a courtier and a debauchee. Charles especially delighted in his conversation. He invited him to his private suppers, and soon afterward conferred on him the appointments of a gentleman of the bedchamber and comptroller of Woodstock Park.

It was shortly after his initiation into the vices of the court that, in the winter of 1665, the Earl of Sandwich was sent in quest of the Dutch East India fleet. Rochester was one of the gay band of courtiers who volunteered their services on the occasion. He was present in the *Revenge* during the desperate attack on the fort of Bergen, in Norway, in the port of which town the Dutch fleet had taken refuge. During the action he particularly distinguished himself by his reckless gallantry. The following year he was present at the great sea fight of the 3d of June, on which occasion he was one of the few volunteers who escaped with their lives. On his return, his friends were delighted at discovering a singular improvement in his moral conduct. During a short interval he lived temperately, shunned his former disorderly companions, and even spoke of his past career of dissipation with abhorrence. This creditable reformation, however, was unhappily of no long continuance, and he gradually relapsed into still more daring irregularities. He admitted to Bishop Burnet, in his last sickness, that for five years together he had been in a continual state of ineptiety.

Whether it was that his nerves had become unstrung by this incessant course of dissipation, certain it is that the reputation which he had acquired for valour, in the Dutch war, was of extremely brief duration. The result of a quar-

rel which he had with Sheffield, Earl of Mulgrave, afterward Duke of Buckingham, sufficiently impaired his character for courage with the world.

Of Rochester's wild freaks and adventures, once so celebrated, many must be looked upon as apocryphal, while many are of a nature the details of which are unfit for insertion. At times he used to amuse himself by wandering about the streets as a beggar, and at others pursued the lowest amours in the meanest disguises. "He found out a footman," says Bishop Burnet, "who knew all the court, and, having furnished him with a red coat and musket as a sentinel, he kept him all the winter long, every night, at the doors of such ladies as he believed might be in intrigues. In the court a sentinel is little minded, and is believed to be posted by a captain of the guards to hinder a combat: so this man saw who walked about and visited at forbidden hours. By this means Lord Rochester made many discoveries. And when he was well furnished with materials, he used to retire into the country for a month or two to write libels. Once, being drunk, he intended to give the king a libel that he had written on some ladies; but by a mistake he gave him one written on himself."

The liberties which Rochester took with the good-humoured monarch led to his frequent, though usually brief, dismissals from court. During one

of his disgraces he took up his abode in the city, and, under an assumed name, obtained admittance to the feasts and amusements of the sober citizens. Like George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, he seems to have been gifted with the peculiar art of being able to adapt himself to all societies ; and, accordingly, by inveighing against the profligacy of the court, and the shamelessness of the royal mistresses, he made himself extremely popular with his new friends. It was not long, however, according to Count Hamilton, before “he grew sick of their cramming and endless invitations.” His most celebrated frolic, which was in the character of a fortune-teller and empiric, was practised during one of his banishments from the court. His stage on Tower Hill was long remembered by the citizens. His address to the public on this occasion, in which he signs himself Alexander Bendo, and professes to cure all disorders, to restore beauty, and a hundred other specific absurdities, will be found in the different editions of his works.

Among the formerly excluded passages of Burnet’s History we find the following severe picture of the libertine poet. “He seemed to have freed himself from all impressions of virtue or religion, of honour or good-nature. He delivered himself without either restraint or decency to all the pleasures of wine and women. He had but one maxim, to which he adhered firmly, that he had

to do everything, and deny himself in nothing, that might maintain his greatness. He was unhappily made for drunkenness, for he had drunk all his friends dead, and was able to subdue two or three sets of drunkards one after another: so it scarce ever appeared that he was disordered after the greatest drinking: an hour or two of sleep carried all off entirely, that no sign of them remained. He would go about business without any uneasiness, or discovering heat either in body or mind. This had a terrible conclusion; for, after he had killed all his friends, he fell at last into such weakness of stomach that he had perpetual colic when he was not hot within, and full of strong liquor, of which he was frequently seized, so that he was always either sick or drunk."

There are said to have been happy intervals in Rochester's life of dissipation which were passed in study. "He used to say," says Aubrey, "that he did very well as long as he lived in the country, but that as soon as he got as far as Brentford he felt the devil enter into him." According to his own expression, in one of his letters, he believed the world in which he sojourned to be as thoughtless and as giddy as he was himself.

As the letters of this irregular genius are but little known, a specimen of his correspondence with Henry Saville, a gay libertine like himself, may not be unwelcome.

“JUNE 22.

“Whether love, wine, or wisdom, which rule you by turns, have the present ascendant, I cannot pretend to determine at this distance; but good-nature, which waits about you with more diligence than Godfrey himself, is my security that you are not unmindful of your former friends. To be from you, and forgotten by you at once, is a misfortune I never was criminal enough to merit, since to the black and fair countesses I villainously betrayed the daily addresses of your divided heart. You forgave that upon the first bottle, and upon the second, on my conscience, would have renounced the whole sex. Oh, that second bottle, Harry, is the sincerest, wisest, and most impartial downright friend we have; tells us truth of ourselves, and forces us to speak truth of others; banishes flattery from our tongues and distrust from our hearts; sets us above the mean policy of court prudence, which makes us lie to one another all day, for fear of being betrayed by others at night. And before God I believe the arrantest villain breathing is honest as long as that bottle lives, and few of that tribe dare venture upon him, at least among the courtiers and statesmen. I have seriously considered one thing, that of the three businesses of this age— women, politics, and drinking—the last is the only exercise at which you and I have not proved ourselves arrant fumblers. If you have the vanity to think

otherwise, when we meet next, let us appeal to friends of both sexes, and, as they shall determine, live and die mere drunkards or entire lovers ; for, as we mingle the matter, it is hard to say which is the most tiresome creature, the loving drunkard or the drunken lover.

“ Bath, the 22d of June, from

“ Your humble servant,

“ ROCHESTER.

“ *To Mr. Henry Saville.*”

Rochester could scarcely have exceeded the years of boyhood when he united himself to Elizabeth, daughter of John Mallet, Esquire, of Enmere in Somersetshire, *la triste héritière* of De Grammont. Her fortune, which amounted to 2,500*l.* a year, would be looked upon with contempt by a modern fortune-hunter. In the days of Charles, however, it was not only regarded as a considerable acquisition by a needy courtier, but even tempted Rochester to commit the grave and daring offence of abduction. On the night on which he made the attempt, the young lady had been supping with her beautiful friend, Frances Stewart, at Whitehall, and was returning home with her grandfather, Lord Haly, when their coach was suddenly arrested near Charing Cross. In a moment they were surrounded by a number of armed men, on foot and horseback, who forcibly hurried the lady into another coach, drawn by six

horses, where she found herself in company with two strange females. The coach drove off at a rapid pace, Rochester, in the meantime, skulking in the neighbourhood of Uxbridge, expecting his accomplices and their victim. The alarm, however, had speedily been raised, and an instant pursuit having been instituted, Rochester was arrested and committed to the Tower. As Charles had been previously a confidant of Rochester in his designs on the heiress, and as he had even personally interfered to obtain her for his favourite by legitimate means, he was naturally not a little annoyed by Rochester's unmeaning outrage. The affair eventually terminated by the lady extending her forgiveness to Rochester, and after a short delay they were married.

Of the character of his countess we know but little. Rochester appears to have treated her with kindness, but, on the other hand, he was constantly absenting himself from her society; and, indeed, his defections were gross, frequent, and unpardonable. Glaring, however, as were his faults, they seem not only to have been readily forgiven by his neglected but devoted countess, but such of her letters as are extant exhibit, under every circumstance of neglect and provocation, the purest and most devoted attachment. "If," she writes to him, "I could have been troubled at anything, when I had the happiness of receiving a letter from you, I should be so because

you did not name a time when I might hope to see you, the uncertainty of which very much afflicts me." And she concluded with much tenderness: "Lay your commands upon me what I am to do, and though it be to forget my children, and the long hope I have lived in of seeing you, yet I will endeavour to obey you; or in the memory only torment myself, without giving you the trouble of putting you in mind, that there lives such a creature as,

"Your faithful humble servant."

Rochester's own letters to his countess, preserved in the British Museum, abound with frequent apologies for his repeated absences and unjustifiable neglect. Generally speaking, he pleads his constant attendance upon the king. On an occasion, however, of his having been banished from court, being evidently at a loss for a legitimate excuse, his apology is amusing enough: he cannot think of paying her a visit while in disgrace. The following specimen of his correspondence is too characteristic to be omitted.

"FROM OUR TUB AT MRS. FOURCARD'S,

"This 18th of Oct.

"WIFE:—We are now in bed, so that we are not in a condition of writing either according to thy merit or our desert. We therefore do command thy benign acceptance of these our letters,

in what way soever by us inscribed or not directed, willing thee therewithal to assure our sole daughter and her issue female, the Lady Anne Tart, of our best respects. This with your care and diligence, in the execution of our firmans, is at present the utmost of our will and pleasure.

“I went away like a rascal without taking leave, dear wife. It is an unpolished way of proceeding, which a modest man ought to be ashamed of. I have left you a prey to your own imaginations amongst my relations, the worst of damnations. But there will come an hour of deliverance, till when, may my mother be merciful unto you. The small share I could spare you out of my pocket I have sent as a debt to Mrs. Rouse; within a week or ten days I return you more.

“Pray write as often as you have leisure to your
“ROCHESTER.

“Remember me to Nan and my Lord Wilmot. You must present my service to my cousins. I intend to be at the deflowering of my niece Ellen, if I hear of it. Excuse my ill paper and my ill manners to my mother; they are both the best the place and age will afford.

“*For my wife.*”

The Lord Wilmot, mentioned in the postscript of the foregoing letter, was his young son, Charles, who survived his father about twelve months.

Considering the libertine character of the father, the following brief letters from Rochester to his son will probably be read with interest.

“CHARLES:— I take it very kindly that you write to me, though seldom, and wish heartily that you would behave yourself so as that I might show you how much I love you and without being ashamed. Obedience to your grandmother, and those who instruct you in good things, is the way to make you happy here and for ever. Avoid idleness, scorn lying, and God will bless you, which I pray.

ROCHESTER.”

“CHARLES:— I hope, when you receive this, and know that I have sent this gentleman to be your tutor, you will be very glad to see I take such care of you, and be very grateful, which is best shown by being obedient and diligent. You are now grown big enough to be a man, if you can be wise enough; and the way to be truly wise is to serve God, learn your book, and observe the instructions of your parents first, and next your tutor, to whom I have entirely resigned you for this seven years; according as you employ that time, you are to be happy or unhappy for ever. I have so good an opinion of you, that I am glad to think you will never deceive me. Dear child, learn your book and be obedient, and you will see what a father I shall be to you. You shall want no pleasure while you

are good, and that you may be good are my constant prayers.

ROCHESTER.

“For my Lord Wilmot.”

By his wild and dissolute course of life, Rochester had not only impaired an excellent constitution, but had exhibited symptoms, before he was thirty, of premature old age. During an illness which attacked him about a year before his death, he seems for the first time to have felt the necessity of religion, and to have sighed for the consolation of that faith which, in his days of buoyant health and rude spirits, had been the subject of his scorn and the vehicle of his wit. Bishop Burnet, who made his acquaintance shortly after this period, has left us an account, in a volume still popular, of the prejudices and arguments he had to combat, and the remorse he was called upon to soothe. “It is a book,” says Doctor Johnson, “which the critic ought to read for its elegance, the philosopher for its arguments, and the saint for its piety.” Burnet, it seems, had previously attended a mistress of Rochester in her last moments. This person had reported so satisfactorily of the bishop’s kindness, and the consolation she had received from his doctrines, that Rochester expressed a strong desire to make his acquaintance. Rochester, who was at this period recovering a small stock of deceitful health at Bath, laid open to the bishop all his secret thoughts and the arguments which had

led to his disbelief in revealed religion. During many a winter evening they calmly discussed the merits of natural as well as revealed religion, Burnet endeavouring to controvert the reasonings of the skeptics, and to force conviction on the mind of his friend. In the spring of 1680 Rochester quitted London for his residence at Woodstock. He was still, it seems, an unwilling disbeliever, but nevertheless his feelings had become softened, and many of his prejudices had been shaken.

The air of his native place effected a transient improvement in Rochester's health. Having indiscreetly, however, travelled on horseback into Somersetshire, the exertion proved too violent for his shattered constitution, and it was with difficulty that he was brought back to Woodstock. He now felt that the hand of death was upon him and, between the writhings of remorse and the distractions of an unsettled faith, his sufferings are described as agonising in the extreme. In this state of mind he was constantly attended by an excellent divine, Mr. Parsons, his mother's chaplain ; and, moreover, received occasional visits from the Bishop of Oxford ; Doctor Marshal, rector of Lincoln College, Oxford ; and lastly, from Doctor Pierce, president of Magdalen College, afterward Dean of Sarum. The circumstances which led to his complete conviction Rochester himself related to Bishop Burnet shortly before his death, at the

same time adducing them as powerful evidences of the truth of Christianity and the power of inward grace. Mr. Parsons, he said, was reading to him the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, containing the prediction of our Saviour's advent and his subsequent passion, when an inward light seemed to break upon his mind. Such was its effect, according to Burnet, that “he was not only convinced by the reasonings he had about it, which satisfied his understanding, but by a power which did so effectually restrain him that he did ever after as firmly believe in his Saviour as if he had seen him in the clouds.” A letter, which the penitent addressed to Doctor Pierce about this period, will be read with great interest.

“RANGER'S LODGE IN WOODSTOCK PARK,
“July, 1680.

“My indisposition renders my intellects almost as feeble as my person, but considering the candour and extreme charity your natural mildness hath always showed me, I am assured at once of a favourable construction of my present lines, which can but faintly express the sorrowful character of a humble and afflicted mind; and also those great comforts your inexhaustible goodness, learning, and piety plenteously afford to the drooping spirits of poor sinners, so that I may truly say, Holy man! to you I owe what consolation I enjoy, in urging God's mercies against

despair, and holding me up under the weight of those high and mountainous sins my wicked and ungovernable life hath heaped upon me. If God shall be pleased to spare me a little longer here, I have unalterably resolved to become a new man ; to wash out the stains of my lewd courses with my tears, and weep over the profane and unhallowed abominations of my former doings ; that the world may see how I loath sin and abhor the very remembrance of those tainted and unclean joys I once delighted in ; these being as the apostle tells us, the things whereof I am now ashamed ; or, if it be his great pleasure now to put a period to my days, that he will accept my last gasp, that the smoke of my death-bed offering may not be unsavoury to his nostrils, and drive me like Cain from his presence. Pray for me, dear doctor, and all you that forget not God, pray for me fervently. Take heaven by force, and let me enter with you in disguise ; for I dare not appear before the dread majesty of that Holy One I have so often offended. Warn all my friends and companions to a true and sincere repentance to-day, while it is called to-day, before the evil day come and they be no more. Let them know that sin is like the angel's book in the Revelations, it is sweet in the mouth, but bitter in the belly. Let them know that God will not be mocked ; that he is a holy God, and will be served in holiness and purity, that requires the whole man and the early man ; bid them make

haste, for the night cometh when no man can work. Oh, that they were wise, that they would consider this, and not with me, with wretched me, delay it until their latter end. Pray, dear sir, continually pray for your poor friend,

“ ROCHESTER.”

At the time when the departing libertine was on his death-bed, a visit was paid to him by one of his former worldly companions, who seems, up to the hour of his arrival at the Ranger's Lodge at Woodstock, to have been in ignorance of the dangerous and distressing state of his friend, both as to body and soul. The account of the visit, with other interesting particulars, is related in the following brief narrative, preserved in the British Museum :

“ When Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, lay on his death-bed, Mr. Fanshaw came to visit him, with an intention to stay about a week with him. Mr. Fanshaw, sitting by the bedside, perceived his lordship praying to God through Jesus Christ, and acquainted Doctor Radcliffe, who attended my Lord Rochester in this illness, and was then in the house, with what he had heard; and told him that my lord was certainly delirious, for to his knowledge, he said, he believed neither in God nor in Jesus Christ. The doctor, who had often heard him pray in the same manner, proposed to Mr.

Fanshaw to go up to his lordship to be further satisfied touching this affair. When they came to his room, the doctor told my lord what Mr. Fanshaw said, upon which his lordship addressed himself to Mr. Fanshaw, to this effect: 'Sir, it is true, you and I have been very bad and profane together, and then I was of the opinion you mention. But now I am quite of another mind; and happy am I that I am so. I am very sensible how miserable I was whilst of another opinion. Sir, you may assure yourself that there is a judge and future state;' and so entered into a very handsome discourse concerning the last judgment, future state, etc., and concluded with a serious and pathetic exhortation to Mr. Fanshaw, to enter into another course of life; adding that he (Mr. F.) knew him to be his friend; that he never was more so than at this time; and, 'Sir,' said he, to use a Scripture expression, 'I am not mad, but speak the words of truth and soberness.' Upon this Mr. Fanshaw trembled, and went immediately afoot to Woodstock, and there hired a horse to Oxford, and thence took coach to London.

"At the same time, Doctor Shorter, who also attended my lord in his illness, and Doctor Radcliffe, walking together in the park, and discoursing touching his lordship's condition, which they agreed to be past remedy, Doctor Shorter, fetching a deep sigh, said, 'Well, I can do him no good, but he has done me a great deal.'

“When Doctor Radcliffe came to reside in London, he made inquiry about Doctor Shorter, and understood he was before that time a libertine in principles, but after that he professed the Roman Catholic religion. I heard Doctor Radcliffe give this account at my Lord Oxford’s table, then Speaker of the House of Commons, June 16, 1702; present, besides Mr. Speaker, Lord Weymouth, Mr. Bromley of Warwickshire, Mr. William Harvey, Mr. Pendarvis, Mr. Henry St. John; and I wrote it down immediately.

“WM. THOMAS.”

Only a few days before Rochester expired, Burnet hastened to pay a visit to his former disputant. “He told me,” says Burnet, “as his strength served him at several snatches (for he was then so low that he could not hold up discourse long at once), what sense he had of his past life; what sad apprehension for having so offended his Maker, and dishonoured his Redeemer; what horrors he had gone through, and how much his mind was turned to call on God and on his crucified Saviour. So that he hoped he should obtain mercy, for he believed he had sincerely repented; and had now a calm in his mind, after that storm he had been in for some weeks. He had strong apprehensions and persuasions of his admittance to heaven; of which he spake not without some extraordinary emotion.”

Among other subjects affecting his spiritual wel-

fare, he spoke of the efficacy of a death-bed repentance, and inquired Burnet's opinion on the subject. As regarded himself, he said, he freely forgave every one; he bore ill-will to no man; he had made arrangements for the payment of his debts, and suffered pain with cheerfulness. He added that "he was contented either to die or live, as should please God; and, though it was a foolish thing for a man to pretend to choose whether he would die or live, yet he wished rather to die. He knew he could never be so well, that life should be comfortable to him. He was confident he should be happy if he died, but he feared if he lived he might relapse." To his friends he sent affectionate messages, reminding them of the uncertain tenure of life, and enjoining them to publish to the world whatever circumstances connected with his own life and death might possibly be beneficial to others. It was his prayer, he said, that, as he had inflicted injury on religion by his life, he might at least do it some service by his death.

For his wife, who joined with him in receiving the sacrament, he expressed the greatest tenderness. He called his children also to his bedside, to whom he solemnly bequeathed his dying blessing and advice. Aubrey says, "He even sent for all his servants, except his cowherd, and, while they surrounded his bed, expressed his remorse to them for his former dissolute life and pernicious opin-

ions." According to the same writer, he affirmed that Hobbes and the philosophers had been his ruin. "This," he cried, laying his hand energetically upon his Bible, "this is the true philosophy."

At last, nature having been entirely spent, he died without a struggle, in the Ranger's Lodge in Woodstock Park, on the 26th of July, 1680, in his thirty-third year. The apartment in which he expired was pointed out to the visitor at Woodstock within the last year or two, and, it is to be hoped, is still in existence. He was buried by the side of his father, under the north aisle of Spilsbury Church, in Oxfordshire.

On the occasion of Rochester's death, we find Archbishop Tillotson entering the following remarks among his private papers:

"Bad men are infidels *se defendendo*. When the affection to our lusts is gone, the objections against religion vanish of themselves.

"The greatest instance any age hath afforded of reformation; not for his own sake, as St. Paul was not, who yet was no enemy to God and religion, but by mistake. I cannot think but it was intended for some greater good to others.

"Atheism and infidelity do not bind up the senses of men strong enough, but they may be awakened by the apprehension of death, or some greater calamity coming upon them."

By his countess, Rochester left four children: Charles, who succeeded him, who died on the 12th

of November, 1681, in his minority; Anne, married to Henry Bainton, Esq., and afterward to Francis, son of Fulke Greville, Lord Broke; Elizabeth, married to Edward Montagu, Earl of Sandwich; and Mallet, who became the wife of John Vaughan, first Viscount Lisburne, in Ireland, and ancestor of the present earl. The title of Rochester became extinct on the death of his son.

CHAPTER XVII.

HENRY JERMYN, LORD DOVER.

Jermyn's Popularity with the Fair Sex — His Personal Appearance — His Intrigue with the Duchess of Cleveland — Banished the Court — His Duel with Thomas Howard — His Death and Burial.

THIS frivolous coxcomb, who turned the heads of half the women of the court of Charles, and whose name figures so conspicuously in its meretricious annals, was a younger son of Thomas Jermyn, Esq., of Rushbroke, in Suffolk. The kindness of his uncle, Henry Jermyn, Earl of St. Albans, the supposed husband of Henrietta Maria, ensured him a favourable reception at court, and enabled him to follow the course of pleasure which was the darling object of his life.

During the exile of the royal family, the Princess of Orange, sister of Charles the Second, was supposed to have been enamoured of him. Accordingly, at the Restoration he found his character for gallantry established, and the ladies predisposed to become his slaves. Nevertheless, if the portrait drawn of him by Count Hamilton affords a correct likeness, the "invincible Jermyn"

must have possessed so few agreeable qualifications either of mind or person, that his success seems almost incredible. "Jermyn," says the count, "was brave, and certainly a gentleman, yet he had neither brilliant actions nor distinguished rank to set him off ; and, as for his figure, he had nothing to boast of. He was diminutive in his person, his head large and his legs small ; his features were not disagreeable, but he was extremely affected in his carriage and behaviour. His wit consisted entirely in expressions learned by rote, which he occasionally employed either in raillery or love. This was the whole foundation of the merit of a man so formidable in his amours." As Jermyn had formerly been an admirer of Miss Hamilton, a prejudice against him in the pages of *De Grammont* may be readily understood.

The beautiful Mrs. Hyde,¹ then a young and happy wife, had early fallen headlong in love with the admired Jermyn ; but it was the favours of the Duchess of Cleveland which raised his glory to its highest pitch. Charles affected to despise his rival,

¹ Theodosia, daughter of Arthur, first Lord Capel, was the first wife of Henry Hyde, afterward Lord Cornbury and Earl of Clarendon. Count Hamilton describes her person : "She was of a middle size, had a skin of a dazzling whiteness, fine hands, and a foot surprisingly beautiful, even in England ; long custom had given such a languishing tenderness to her looks that she never opened her eyes but like a Chinese ; and when she ogled one would have thought she was doing something worse." Her son succeeded as third Earl of Clarendon, and died in 1723.

but nevertheless dismissed him from court. As the king made a point of never interfering with the gallantries of his friends, he was the more provoked by the infidelity of his mistress and the insolence of Jermyn. It may be mentioned, as an instance of Charles's good-nature, that he no sooner came to terms with the imperious duchess than he consented to Jermyn's recall. The latter, however, it appears, remained for several months sulking at his country-seat, "setting up," says Count Hamilton, "for a little philosopher, under the eyes of the sportsmen in the neighbourhood, who regarded him as an extraordinary instance of the mutability of fortune." According to the count, his sole motive for returning to court was to make an attack on Miss Jennings's virtue, which had hitherto been regarded as impregnable. As regarded her virtue he made little progress, but over her heart he was more successful.

With the exception of a duel which he fought with Thomas Howard,¹ on account of the infamous Lady Shrewsbury (on which occasion he was left on the field with little hopes of life), the career of this insignificant man of pleasure affords few important or entertaining particulars. On the 13th of May, 1685, soon after the accession of James the Second, he was created by letters patent

¹ Fourth son of Sir William Howard, and brother of Charles, first Earl of Carlisle. He was the husband of Mary Villiers, Duchess of Richmond; died in 1678.

Baron Jermyn of Dover, and, on the 4th of January, 1687, was nominated a commissioner of the treasury with Sir Stephen Fox and others. About the same period (with Lords Arundel and Bellasyse, Father Petre, and others), he was nominated one of the secret committee for watching over the interests of the Roman Catholics. In 1688, we find him governor of Portsmouth, but he appears to have failed in obtaining the command of the Life Guards, which was the principal object of his ambition. The last years of his life were passed in retirement at Cheveley, in Cambridgeshire, where he died without issue, 6th April, 1708. His remains were carried to Bruges, in Flanders, and were interred in the monastery of the Carmelites in that city.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ELIZABETH BUTLER, COUNTESS OF CHESTERFIELD.

De Grammont's Alluring Portrait of This Lady — Her Lineage — Her Marriage — Notice of the Earl of Chesterfield — His Jealousy — The Duke of York Becomes the Professed Admirer of Lady Chesterfield — Her Husband Removes Her to the Peak — Supposed to Have Been Poisoned — Her Husband's Account of Her Death.

WE cannot but lament that a daughter of the high-minded Ormond and of his virtuous duchess should have been mixed up with the scandalous intrigues of the court of Charles, and that one of a race so illustrious, if not exactly a wanton, should at least have been a very blamable coquette. In the alluring portrait of her by De Grammont, in the meretricious picture of her large blue eyes, of her exquisite countenance and faultless symmetry, there is something which rather displeases than charms. The daughter of a race so virtuous should have figured otherwise than in wild frolics and voluptuous details.

Elizabeth, daughter of James, Duke of Ormond, was born at Kilkenny, on the 29th of June, 1640, and consequently at the Restoration had not com-

pleted her twentieth year. Shortly before that event she married Philip, Earl of Chesterfield,¹ a young man of disagreeable manners and immoral habits. He seems to have entertained the best opinion of himself with the worst conceivable one of women, and to have been principally remarkable for the jealousy of his disposition and the redundancy of his hair. Swift speaks of him as “the greatest knave in England.” Whatever may have been the secret of their domestic differences, we discover, at a very early period of their marriage, aversion on her part and cruelty on his.

It was natural, in a libertine court, that a young, beautiful, and vivacious woman, willing enough to be admired, and openly neglected by her morose husband, should have been surrounded by lovers on every side. The admiration which she excited, if it failed in restoring the affection of her lord, had at least the effect of inflaming his jealousy to a very painful degree. He became, or affected to have become, the lover of his own wife, and, disregarding the ridicule of the court, was constantly

¹ Philip Stanhope, second Earl of Chesterfield, was born in 1633. He married, first, Lady Anne Percy, eldest daughter of Algernon, Earl of Northumberland; secondly, Lady Elizabeth Butler, the subject of the present memoir; and, thirdly, Lady Elizabeth Dormer, eldest daughter of Charles, Earl of Caernarvon. His lordship held the appointments of chamberlain to Catherine of Braganza, lord warden of the king's forests and parks; was sworn of the Privy Council in 1680, and was colonel of the 3d regiment of foot. He died, aged eighty, 28th January, 1713.

observed to be either watching her or at her side. But it was now Lady Chesterfield's turn to retaliate. Either intoxicated by the adulation of a host of coxcombs, or rendered callous by his previous neglect, she returned his reviving attentions with unequivocal contempt. Lord Chesterfield only waited to be revenged. While he looked with an eye of jealousy upon all, his suspicions fell principally on the Duke of York, who had for some time been the professed admirer of his wife, and who was the most indiscreet lover of the court.

About this period, Francisco Corbeta, an Italian, was charming the gay court of Charles with his delightful performances on the guitar. The king expressed himself an ardent admirer of his talent; the Duke of York became his pupil; a guitar was seen on every table, and Francisco became the fashion of the day. He had lately composed a particular sarabande of great merit. The Duke of York wished to learn it of Lord Arran, whose skill was only surpassed by that of the Italian; and as his sister, Lady Chesterfield, possessed the best guitar in England, it was decided that they should adjourn to her apartments and take advantage of its admirable tones. On entering, they not only found the lady but Lord Chesterfield himself, who appeared evidently disconcerted and annoyed at the unexpected intrusion. Notwithstanding, however, that the sarabande was repeated

twenty times, and that their stay consequently was of some length, Lord Chesterfield still continued in the room, as if determined to see the end of the visit. To his annoyance, however, he unexpectedly received a summons from the queen, requiring his attendance, in the capacity of her chamberlain, at the introduction of the Muscovite ambassadors. He was still more annoyed on discovering shortly afterward that Lord Arran had followed him to the court, and consequently that the duke was enjoying a *tête-à-tête* with his wife.

But a circumstance, even more distressing to his jealous feelings, was communicated by him in confidence to James Hamilton. Lady Chesterfield, it seems, was in the habit of wearing green stockings, the colour she conceived most becoming to her pretty ankles. "After the audience," said her husband, "of those confounded Muscovites, I went to Miss Stewart's apartments, whither the king had just entered before me; and as if the duke had sworn to pursue me that day wherever I went, he came in just after me." The conversation turned upon the extraordinary appearance of the ambassadors. "I know not," proceeded Lord Chesterfield, "where that fool Crofts had heard that the Muscovites had all handsome wives, and that all their wives had handsome legs. Upon this the king maintained that no woman ever had such handsome legs as Miss Stewart; and she, to

prove the truth of his Majesty's assertion, immediately showed her leg above the knee. Some were ready to prostrate themselves in order to adore its beauty, for, indeed, nothing can be handsomer; but the duke alone began to criticise it. He contended that it was too slender, and that for his own part he would give nothing for a leg that was not thicker and shorter, and concluded by saying that no leg was worth anything without green stockings; now this, in my opinion, was a sufficient demonstration that he had just seen green stockings, and had them fresh in his remembrance."

Whether Lady Chesterfield's flirtation with the Duke of York amounted to positive criminality may perhaps be doubted. There were, however, subsequent circumstances in their intercourse sufficient to inflame a far less jealous disposition than that of her irritable husband. A scene, of which he was himself a witness, at length decided him. Enraged almost to madness, he suddenly hurried her from London. The seclusion of his own seat of Bretby in Derbyshire appeared a fit retirement for the offending beauty, and there the young and unhappy creature continued during the remainder of her short life. According to Pepys, "to send a man's wife to the Peak when she vexes him," became a proverb at court.

We have seen Lord Chesterfield unsuspiciously disclosing his griefs to James Hamilton, who was

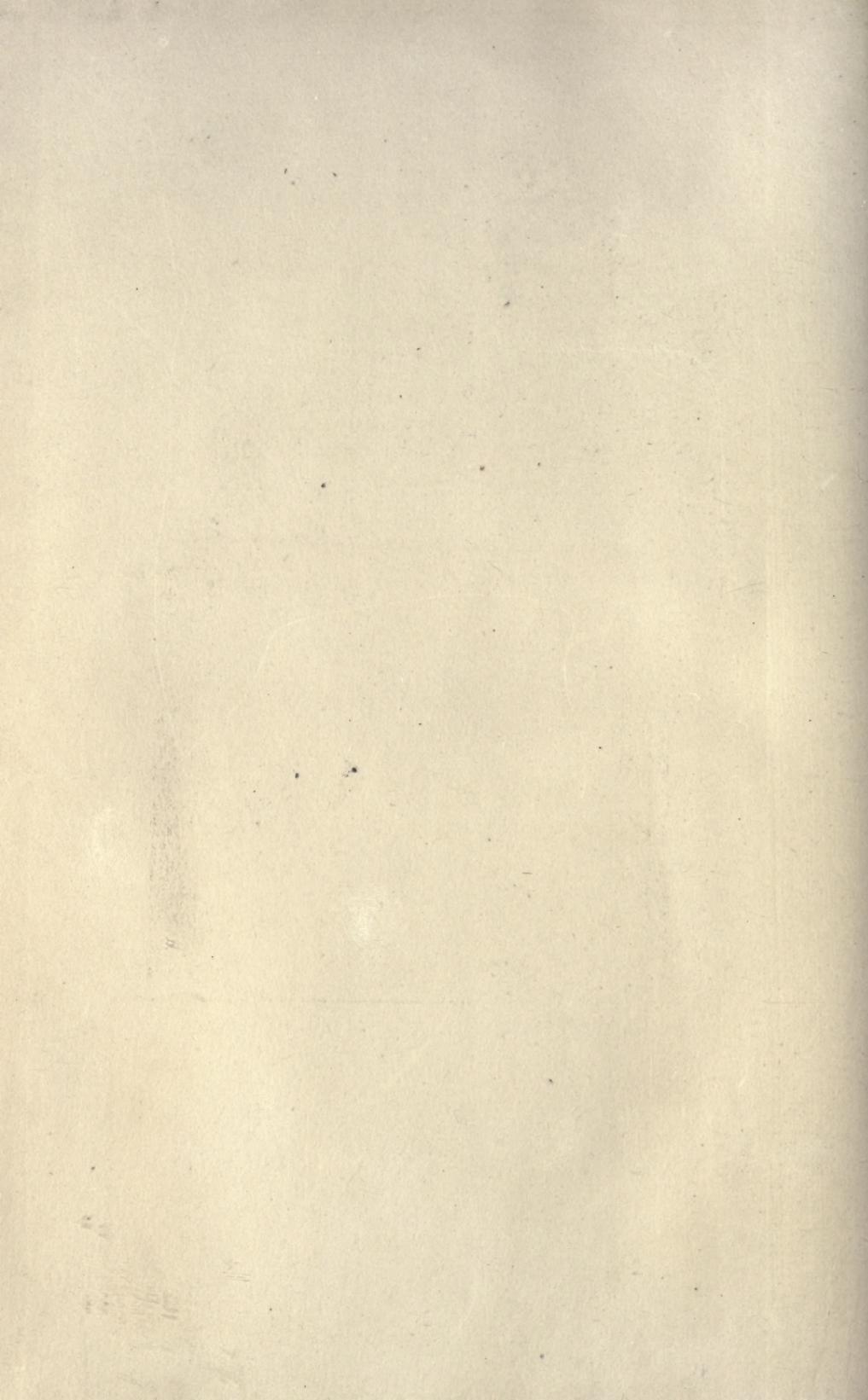
his wife's cousin and his own friend. Hamilton, however, though ostensibly in love with Lady Castlemaine, had long been an admirer of Lady Chesterfield, and a rival with the Duke of York for her favours. Accordingly, when her husband disclosed to him the tale of her impropriety, and the evidences of her having conferred kindness on another, he listened with feelings of jealousy scarcely less acute than those of the unsuspecting Chesterfield, and was even cruel enough to propose her banishment into Derbyshire. Lady Chesterfield afterward sufficiently retaliated on her barbarous lover. The manner in which she avenged herself is fully detailed in the "*Mémoires de Grammont*," and forms not the least agreeable portion of that delightful work.

Lady Chesterfield never again returned to the gay scenes which she had so unwillingly quitted. Whether she became reconciled to her seclusion, or repented of her indiscretions, we have no record. Shortly, however, after her leaving London she gave birth to a daughter, Lady Elizabeth Stanhope, who became the wife of John Lyon, fourth Earl of Strathmore. Lady Chesterfield survived the event but three years, and is reported to have died under circumstances of peculiar horror. The earl, it was asserted, insisted on her taking the sacrament as a pledge of her innocence with respect to the Duke of York, on which some poison is said to have been inserted

by the duke's chaplain in the sacramental wine, of the effects of which she died. The story was, at least partially, credited by Lord Chesterfield's family. His son, Lord Stanhope, had married Lady Gertrude Saville, a daughter of the Marquis of Halifax. This lady was on bad terms with her father-in-law, and, accordingly, whenever she happened to sit at the same table with him, she was invariably furnished with her own cup, a bottle of wine, and another of water, out of which alone she could be persuaded to drink, and then only from the hands of her own servant.

On the other hand, Lord Chesterfield attributed his wife's death to the plague, which was then raging. "It being the great plague year," he says, "she fell ill of the spotted fever, and died; whereupon I returned to my own house at Bretby, where I also fell sick of the spotted fever or plague." In his letters he refers to her dissolution without a trace of regret.

Lady Chesterfield expired at Wellinborough (where she was residing for the benefit of the waters), in July, 1665, in her twenty-fifth year.



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